

We Are Mary's Children
Use of Analogy in Teaching Religion
By Their Speech You Shall Know Them
Irish Visit
Seek the Source: Find and Follow
Church History in High School—Why?
Biblical Characters—Abraham
Saint Bede—Teacher of Christianity
Stories of God for Kindergarteners

Vol. XVII, No. 9

May, 1947



COLLEGE RELIGION~HIGH SCHOOL RELIGION-
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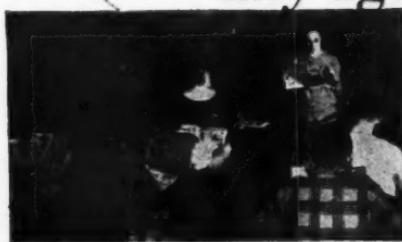
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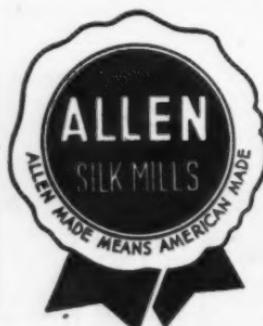
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THE CATHOLIC EDUCATOR

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From a review in the January issue of THE CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL REVIEW

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Contributors to This Issue

Sister Mary Clara

Sister Mary Clara concludes her present series of "Stories of God for Kindergarteners" in this issue. As our readers know, she teaches in the Riverside Convent School, Riverside, Connecticut.

Sister M. Marguerite, R.S.M.

Sister M. Marguerite teaches secretarial science in Mount St. Agnes Junior College, Mount Washington, Baltimore. Her last article in the JOURNAL, on the Little Office of the Immaculate Conception, appeared in the December, 1946, issue.

Rev. John G. Dickson, S.M., M.A.

Imitation of Christ by imitation of His devotion to His Mother is explained by Father Dickson of the Society of Mary. He teaches junior and senior religion in Chaminade High School at Dayton, Ohio. Father Dickson received his B.A. and M.A. in English from the University of Dayton. For nine years he has been teaching in the schools of the Marianists in Dayton, Hamilton (N. Y.), Philadelphia, and San Francisco. He is a member of the Miami Valley Guidance Association and is

editor of the "Marianist Sodality Moderator." He has contributed articles to the "Marianist," the University of Dayton "Exponent," and the "Marianist Teacher of Religion."

Sister M. Florence Feeney, O.S.B.

Sister M. Florence Feeney, who is librarian and professor of library science at Mount St. Scholastica College, Atchison, Kansas, was educated at St. Benedict's and Mount St. Scholastica, both in Atchison, and Rosary College, River Forest, Illinois (A.B. in L.S.). She also took courses at the Catholic University of America. Sister was a teacher in Kansas, Missouri and Colorado schools conducted by her order from 1916 to 1932. She has been librarian of Mount St. Scholastica since 1932. During the coming summer she will be an instructor at Catholic University. She is a member of the Catholic Library Association (chairman of the national publicity committee from 1939 to 1940), of the American Library Association, and of the National Catholic Educational Association. She was a cooperating indexer of the Catholic Periodical Index in 1930 and 1931. She has contributed to the "Benedictine Review," "Catholic Educational Review," and the "Catholic Library World."

Sister Anita Marie Jochem, O.S.F., M.A.

Sister Anita Marie teaches instrumental music, piano, harp and organ at Sacred Heart

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School, Hubbard Woods, Illinois. Previously she taught English and music at St. Francis Academy, Joliet, Illinois, and St. Clement's High School in Chicago. Sister received her A.B. in music from the College of St. Francis at Joliet and her A.M. in English literature from Loyola University, Chicago. She then did graduate work in music at the Chicago Musical College. She contributed an article entitled "Reading for Adolescents" to the February, 1946, issue of the "Catholic Educational Review," which was reprinted in the "New World."

**Sister M. Thomas Aquinas Carroll,
R.S.M.**

Sister M. Thomas Aquinas, professor of history at Mount Mercy College, Pittsburgh, continues her series on the Venerable Bede as a teacher of Christianity, discussing the content of his writings on the Church. The first article deals with Bede and his works; the next will discuss the content of his writings on the life of virtue.

**Very Reverend Monsignor Carl J.
Ryan, Ph.D.**

Monsignor Ryan contributes the second in his series of articles on the teaching of Church History in high school. He is active in Catholic education as superintendent of parochial schools in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, in

civic affairs of the city, and has contributed to various periodicals.

**Reverend Gilmore H. Guyot, C.M.,
S.T.L., S.Scr.B.**

Father Guyot continues his interesting and helpful series on Old Testament characters with the first of two articles on Abraham. He is professor of Sacred Scripture at Kenrick Seminary, St. Louis.

Thomas W. Sheehan, M.A.

Mr. Sheehan has been a teacher, principal and superintendent of several schools in Massachusetts, and professor of education at Seton Hill College, Greensburg, Pennsylvania; St. John's University, Brooklyn; and Niagara University, Buffalo. He is now a member of the Boston College faculty, in the Department of Education. He is a graduate of Salem State Normal School, the University of Chicago (Ph.B.), Columbia University (M.A.), and the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. He did advanced study in philosophy at the Catholic University of America. He has visited Ireland several times to see the schools in action, and from that experience he has contributed the delightful little vignette, "Irish Visit," which appears in this issue of the JOURNAL. Mr. Sheehan has also contributed to "Columbia," "The Modern Language Journal," "Phi Delta Kappan," and several teachers' magazines.

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THE CATHOLIC EDUCATOR

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Catholic Action in the School

Catholic Action is not something new. It comes down to us from apostolic times. The pronouncements of recent popes, especially of the present Holy Father and his immediate predecessor, have directed the attention of the Catholic world to the need of this lay apostolate.

It is the duty and the privilege of the Catholic school and of Catholic educators to make their students aware of the apostolate and to train them in the practice of it. The very first principle of Catholic Action is contained in the clear statement of Father Anderl that "it is the definite type of machinery designed by the Holy See for applying the principles laid down in the encyclicals and other papal teachings to every phase of life by the lay people themselves." Results are to be achieved through the organized Catholic laity in collaboration with their respective bishops. Those who take part must have an understanding of the genius and the purpose of the work as well as training in the techniques.

The Holy Father recommends meetings or conventions lasting a day or a week for the purpose of learning and asking God's grace. Nor are we to be content with national congresses; meetings should be held on a diocesan and on a parish basis. Informed leaders will impart knowledge and zeal through appropriate lectures, demonstrations, and speeches. Among the listeners we should have members of certain special groups, "such as young people and students of both sexes, men and workingmen, members of the various professions, doctors, lawyers, merchants, and the like." The

Holy Father advocates special groups of priests, religious men and women, professors, and teachers. For all groups, the discussion should center around the topic of special interest to the given group or groups from the standpoint of religion and the apostolate of Catholic Action (Pius XI, letter, *Quamvis Nostra*, 1935).

The Catholic school is the nursery of Catholic Action. Pope Pius XI many times insisted that the practice of the lay apostolate is more necessary in the student world than anywhere else. Christian teachers must take the most careful interest in the young, for the future is in their hands. Papal documents advocate the organization of centers or groups or "cells" of Catholic Action for boys and girls in *all educational institutions*. Teachers will find it easy to win the coöperation of young children and of adolescent students who are easily stirred to high idealism and a noble purpose to serve their fellow-man.

It is the great merit of this apostolate that it is built upon and of itself strengthens two great principles of Catholic life—that we individually have a responsibility to God not only for our own salvation but for the salvation of our fellow-man in so far as it lies within our power to help, and that our membership in the mystical body makes us collaborators in this apostolate. Catholic Action wins the individual students and the school to Christ. Their school experience permeates them with a true Christian spirit that must of its very nature diffuse itself into the lay apostolate, and it makes of them trained workers who will in later life be "the backbone of Catholic Action on a national basis" (*Catholic Action Priests' Bulletin*, Chicago, Feb., 1946).

Pope Pius XII looks upon this apostolic formation as a safeguard of Christian living. It develops strong personal convictions within the student and gives him a sense of responsibility for living up to Christian ideals. He comes to know that he cannot influence others without giving them his own example. He cannot be content with mediocrity in Christian living. Through confirmation he is a soldier of Christ and he

must fight on under His leadership to achieve personal sanctification and to lead others to the Christian way of living. This Christ-like example makes for the welfare of the school itself. "No one will question," asserts Cardinal Pacelli (1936), "the incalculable good (this apostolic training) does by way of mutual example among the better disposed of the students; the power it gives them to bring their less exemplary students to better ways; the impulse it gives them to draw from their daily life at school or college a true preparation for the work which they expect to undertake, either during vacation or at the end of their studies, in the ranks of Catholic Action." The apostolic activities of the student body renew the Christian spirit of the school as a whole, and thus achieve a chief objective of the organized lay apostolate, namely, the Christianization of an institution and the establishment of it as a powerful instrument in the work. There is no better radiating center of Catholic Action than the Catholic school.

Finally, the Holy Father rejoices that through this apostolate our young people receive a formation that makes them more hearty soldiers to overcome the many grave dangers which are incident to the social life of our day, and which, as we know too well from experience, are very common even among young people who have been educated in Catholic schools. Religious teachers in America welcome this definite type of machinery devised by the popes for forming students into a body of apostles available for Catholic Action. America needs such a leaven, for there is among us today a widespread indifference to spiritual norms in conduct and spiritual values in life. This great apostolate inculcates in all participants a sense of responsibility, a respect for authority, and a considerateness for the rights of others. In their Pastoral Letter of 1919, the American hierarchy called these very traits the necessary foundations of civic virtue and declared that they are the more necessary where, as in a democracy, the citizen enjoying a larger freedom has a greater obligation to govern himself. Catholic Action makes for high citizenship here and hereafter.

Catholic Schools Serve the Nation

Catholics are not unaware of the saving that their school system effects for the taxpayers of the nation. Today 2,638,737 pupils are enrolled in the elementary and the secondary schools of the Catholic school system. This huge number of the young citizens of our nation receive instruction in the standard school subjects and training for high citizenship without one penny of support from the public exchequer. At present rates of school support in many of the states of the United States, this means a saving of over \$400,000,000 annually.

Recently the Reverend Doctor John A. O'Brien, author of *The Faith of Millions*, now professor of religion at the University of Notre Dame, has addressed himself to this subject. "Much of the newspaper discussion," writes Doctor O'Brien, "concerning the recent decision of the U. S. Supreme Court upholding a New Jersey law permitting pupils attending parochial schools to ride in public buses, was singularly off the beam. It conveyed the totally erroneous impression that Catholics are in some way adding to the burden of taxpayers through the operation of their system of schools. The exact opposite is the case."

Many of our non-Catholic brethren comfortably assume that a gigantic organization like the Catholic school system must certainly receive financial help from state or federal sources. They are amazed when they find out the simple truth: that Catholics pay their share of the support of public education and, in addition, assume the burden of maintaining, out of religious principle, a school system of their own. The Catholic school is the greatest religious fact in the United States today. It is supported solely out of the private resources of a group who are profoundly convinced that their children must have education based on religion and morality. If this school system were abolished tomorrow, the school tax would rise sharply in every city in the United States. The late Mayor Walker once declared that the city of New York would be bankrupt without the help of the Catholic schools.

Many American cities have a large proportion of their school population educated in Catholic schools. This fact is brought forcefully to our attention when the superintendents of these schools issue their annual reports or meet for their annual deliberations, as they did in Boston last month, April 8-10.

Catholic leadership and Catholic conviction make the Catholic school secure. If argument were needed to win Catholic parents to support a religious school for their children, it is found in the jeremiads about the deficiencies in modern education of the young. In a recent article in the *Survey Graphic* (March 1947), Doctor Henry A. Murray declares that "we are living in a moral vacuum." "It is distinctly bad taste," declares Doctor Murray, "to talk or write, as I am doing, about morality. A man who mentions morality must be a pompous stuffed shirt, an old fuddyduddy with a secret sense of guilt. Here is a concern that has occupied men's minds for generations, and in a few years it drops out of existence. It is seldom discussed." He speaks further about the retreat of our elders and our institutions from a sense of responsibility and a position of authority in matters moral, but he admits that the parochial schools, as far as he can see, have been guilty of no retreat.

High idealism gave our schools birth; may they continue to stand for those ideals. We have no patience with a negative orientation in the sphere of morals. We seek to produce the true and finished man of character. That is our highest contribution to the America we love so much.

STORIES OF GOD FOR KINDERGARTENERS

By SISTER MARY CLARA

Riverside Convent School, Riverside, Connecticut

Nativity

At last God had come. He turned Himself into a baby boy and came down to earth to show us what to do if we wished to get to heaven. Now we call Him Jesus. How happy Adam and Eve would be if they had been in that stable with Mary and Joseph. We call Mary our Blessed Mother now because she is Jesus' mother. Later on we shall find out how Jesus gave her to us to be our mother, too.

Just think, as Blessed Mother was holding Jesus in her arms she was thinking, "This is really and truly God who has turned Himself into a tiny bit of a baby. God made me and now He lets me hold Him in my arms. It is going to be very hard to be God's mother but He will help me. How wonderful it is to be able to see God and to hold Him."

God wanted everyone to love Him. He wanted everyone to come to Him. He thought, "If I come as a strong soldier children will be afraid of Me. If I come as a powerful king people will not come to Me. I shall come as a tiny baby. Then everyone will love Me and come to Me."

How good God was to come that way. He was anxious to have everyone love Him. He wanted to grow up just as we grow up. He would be hungry just as we get hungry. He would be tired just as we get tired. He wanted to show us how we could act, what we should do, and what we should say, so that we could please Him and get to heaven. Let us tell Him how glad we are that He chose to become a tiny baby.

"Dear Jesus, I am glad that You came as a tiny baby. We were all tiny babies once and You are just like us. You wanted to be like us. You want us to be like You. You were kind

to your playmates when You grew up. You were obedient to Your parents. You want us to be kind and obedient, too. You could become a little tiny baby through Your own power but we cannot become like You unless You help us. We cannot do anything by ourselves. We need You for everything. You are very happy to help us. You made us that way so that You could help us. I want to grow more and more like You every day, Jesus. Will You please help me?"

Shepherd

On the first Christmas night Jesus was born in a little stable in Bethlehem. Over on the hillside a short distance from the stable were some shepherds taking care of their sheep. Suddenly they saw a bright light in the sky right near them. They heard voices singing out. They were afraid. The angels said, "Do not be afraid. We have come to tell you that Jesus is born. You will find Him over in the stable. He is wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger."

The shepherds were excited. They were happy to hear this wonderful news. How anxious they were to see Him. They had been waiting so long for Him to come. At last Jesus was born. They would go to see Him. They would go right away. This little baby was Jesus. Jesus was God. This was His birthday, so they must bring Him gifts.

These shepherds were poor. They did not have very much to give to Jesus. Their most precious treasures were the sheep. They picked out their favorite little lambs. They were going to give Jesus the best things they had.

Over the hills they hurried. They knew the way. Often on cold winter nights they had brought their sheep over to this stable to shield them from the cold and the rain.

There was a light in the stable. As they came closer they slowed up a bit and strained their eyes to get the first look at God become a baby.

On tiptoe they made their way over to the manger, the little box where Jesus lay. These poor shepherds knelt down quietly and reverently. There was God. They prayed, but

they did not use any words. Their thoughts were prayers. They were telling God how happy they were to see Him; they were thanking Him for coming and they were promising to do whatever He would have them do—all at one time without saying a single word.

Our Blessed Mother smiled. These shepherds knew that she was God's mother. No one needed to tell them. She was so beautiful. She smiled so kindly. They seemed to know that she loved them. They were God's children. Now they would be her children, too.

Saint Joseph watched. He was the guardian of Mary. He was the guardian of Jesus, too.

The shepherds gave Jesus their baby lambs.

Those shepherds were lucky to be able to see Jesus on His very birthday. Jesus must have loved them a great deal to give them this special favor.

Let us learn this story so we can tell our mothers and fathers all about it.

Story

Over on a hill were some shepherds taking care of their sheep. They saw a bright light and heard angels singing. They were afraid. The angels said, "Do not be afraid. Tonight Jesus is born. He is over in the stable. You will find Him wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger."

The shepherds picked up their baby lambs and brought them over to baby Jesus.

USE OF ANALOGY IN TEACHING RELIGION

By SISTER M. MARGUERITE, R.S.M.

Mount St. Agnes College, Mt. Washington, Baltimore 9, Maryland

Because of children's proclivity (whether fortunate or unfortunate) for taking everything literally, the use of comparisons, metaphors, and analogies in teaching is likely to be misleading. Since children at least up to the sixth grade are inclined to accept statements on faith, there is really no need to amplify religious teaching by means of comparison. Further, too varied a use of examples will cause young pupils to lose a sense of values. In *The World, the Flesh, and Father Smith*, Father Smith decided to improve classroom instruction on purgatory by means of what he considered a convincing and clarifying analogy. To test a child's attention, and to test his own success in this method, he asked for a summary of his instructions, and received the answer:

"Please, Father, I know. You were talking about what toffee would taste like in purgatory."¹

Many a teacher has had an experience similar to that of the young Sister whose charges listened in absorbed attention to the remarks of a visiting priest. When he left, the teacher said:

"I am so glad you were interested in Father's talk. What was it that so impressed you?" and the answer came almost in chorus:

"Please, Sister, he had a loose-y toot'."

It is when the teen-agers begin to question and to reason that it is helpful to put before their minds such comparisons as may help to clarify the teaching of revelation. For it is well to keep in mind that while faith is required in order to grasp and accept revelation with complete surety, the use of reason is not

¹ Bruce Marshall, *The World, the Flesh, and Father Smith* (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1945), p. 54.

prohibited. That is, reason may be exercised in investigating the relation of one idea to another, of the part to the whole, and of the whole body of truth to the end for which it was revealed; namely, salvation and sanctification. Thus the use of analogy could contribute to the ultimate end of knowledge—wisdom, which is the flower of knowledge.

The following examples are offered as being within the comprehension of high school students, both junior and senior.

Examples—Effects of Original Sin

The effects of original sin: let us suppose a naturalist wished to produce a fruit having certain characteristics of taste, odor, size, and color. Of course, he could not make it by his mere *fiat* but, by crossing and grafting what is already in existence, he might be able to bring about the desired result. If, after all his efforts and the application of his skill, the experiment failed, he would of course be justified in destroying the whole thing, root, stock, and branch. But suppose, in his patience, he found that as each defective seed sprouted and came to blossom, he could inject into each, individually, some substance that would enable the plant, or tree to produce the desired odor, taste, size, and color. The naturalist would be justified in continuing his cultivation. Now God, as a supreme Naturalist, desired to create the human race with certain characteristics, notably among them the use of free will to contribute to His glory. At its very inception, the human race used that free will contrary to His will. Instead of annihilating His production, God found a way (foreseen, of course, in His omniscience) by the application of baptism and other grace-giving sacraments, to give to each individual soul the capacity of producing fruits pleasing to Him and acceptable in exchange for the eternal life which the human race has lost as a racial entity.

This analogy may be linked with St. Paul's metaphor:

"I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase. Now, he that planteth, and he that watereth, are one.... you are God's husbandry" (I Cor. 3, 6, 7, 9). Again, in his Epistle to the Romans: "For if the firstfruit be holy, so is the lump

also: and if the root be holy, so are the branches; and if some of the branches be broken, and thou, being a wild olive, art ingrafted in them... Boast not against the branches... Thou wilt say then: The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well: because of unbelief they were broken off" (11, 16-20).

Our Lord Himself, in His memorable discourse before His Passion, told His disciples: "I am the true vine; and my Father is the husbandman" (John 15, 1).

This whole fifteenth chapter is symbolic, not only of the possibility of renewal by grafting, but also of the intimate connection between the vine and the branches; *i.e.*, the faith-testing fact of our Lord's close union with us.

Our Lord's Incarnation

Related to that intertwining is the astounding fact of His Incarnation. Perhaps an analogy will serve to bring home to our students the necessity of God's becoming Man, since He willed to repair our human disobedience: Suppose that a vandal should damage Fra Angelico's *Crucifixion* in the Museum of San Marco, Florence. The harm might be patched up in some way; perhaps a lesser artist might try to reproduce the idea; but it is evident that only Fra Angelico himself could restore the picture perfectly and properly. So only God could restore His handiwork properly—but only a man could suffer and offer his sufferings of his own free will. Hence the ineffable coming to earth of God in the form of man.

He came, not only to save us, but also to give mankind the knowledge about God that only God could give. The following illustration may serve to clarify the actual nearness and attainability of God, who, as St. Paul says, is "not far from every one of us" (Acts 17, 27). A candidate for a doctor's degree had for her thesis "The Concept of Poetry in the Criticism of T. S. Eliot." In her scholarly research, she read practically everything available on poetry, everything, certainly, that T. S. Eliot published, everything that philosophy could give her on "concepts." But—she did not get in touch with

T. S. Eliot directly. When asked why she did not, she answered, rather amused at the naivete of the question:

"Oh, T. S. Eliot is a sort of key figure in the transition between the old, subjective, lyrical form of poetry, and the new idea of poetry, as embodied in his own works, and those of such writers as the symbolists and the imagists. He is much too important to be approached by every little budding scholar who might take his works for research."

A Weighty Thought

Now, her reasoning is no doubt cogent, prudent, and convincing. Yet, suppose one wanted to write a thesis, "The Concept of Divinity in the Manifestations of God," one could, by means of natural religion, prove His existence, His omnipotence, and His eternity. Through divine revelation, however, we could get in intimate touch with God Himself. We might not presume to sit at the feet of T. S. Eliot and learn from him his idea of poetry and the norms of evaluating it; we can study divine revelation and learn everything about Him that is possible for our human minds to grasp.

This is a weighty thought, and it needs driving home into the intellects of our charges by every means at our command. Perhaps the example given is too concrete. A similar, but broader analogy would be the example of the art critic. One living today could take a masterpiece of Raphael and tell you all about it: how he held his brush, in what direction the strokes went, what mixture of paints he made, why he had light here and dark there, but it would all be objective. A fellow-worker of Raphael in the Sistine chapel, talented perhaps, but in a lesser degree, one working on the scaffolding with him, hearing his voice, and watching his progress, would have a much deeper and more intimate knowledge of Raphael's production. And if he loved him deeply as a fellow-worker and as a master, the knowledge itself would correspondingly deepen. It is this deep and intimate knowledge of a friend and fellow-worker that God allows us to have of His works.

How? Mainly through His Church, the third great factor in the coming of Jesus to this earth.

In describing His Church, Our Lord Himself introduced many metaphors and parables. His Church is a kingdom, a marriage feast, a crop of wheat and cockle, a net full of fishes, a big business enterprise, and a vineyard. Note that all these comparisons are examples immediately within the comprehension and daily experience of the people.

The Church and Salvation

Anent the doctrine, "Outside the Church there is no salvation," it can be brought to mind that in our Lord's analogies, *all* were taken in the net, *all* were invited to the marriage feast, and *all* were members of the kingdom. He was teaching the total participation of the human race in the redemption He came to offer. Only those were eliminated who through their own fault refused participation in His sacrifice. Only those were rejected who by perverted will proved their unfitness to associate with His chosen ones.

Through the justice and mercy of God, it is true that no one is condemned who, through no fault of his own, is not a member of the visible Church of Christ. However, the necessity of membership in the Church for salvation is the very seed of zeal for all missionary activity. Instead of accentuating the undemanding, selfish idea that we are not our brother's keeper, it should be our joy and privilege to implant that seed of missionary zeal in the hearts of all our pupils.

Devotion to Mary

But there is another seed to be planted, and it is perhaps one subject that needs no analogy for its clarification: devotion to Mary. It is true that scholars, saints, and poets have vied with one another in clothing her with the fairest figures that language can furnish. The Litany of Loretto is a rhythmic chant of figurative speech; but the motherhood of Mary appeals in its stark reality to every aspiring student of nature.

and of grace. Some children might have unfortunate home conditions that would not bear comparison with the holy house of Loretto—but she is the comforter of the afflicted. Not all pupils are models of obedience, purity, and charity, but she is the refuge of sinners. At no possible age could our classes ever say to us: "But we are too young—or too old—for the teaching of devotion to Mary."

There is no intelligence quotient that would be too high or too low for the study of Mary. There is no social class, no variety of occupation, and no station in life where the teaching of Mary would be out of place. Figures of speech, analogies, and comparisons may aid us in our attempt to honor her, but for actual vividness in our instruction on her life and virtues, the simplest of statements would suffice. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the mother of God; Christ on the Cross gave her to us as our mother.

Devious Paths

"Meditation," she would say, "nourishes the soul and fills it with the love of Christ; but one must approach the Savior with a pure heart, free of all self-love. Everything earthly must be cast aside that you may easily rise to the pinnacle of God's love to draw rich graces from your daily meditation. Like Moses, a sister should manifest by her exterior the fact that she has spoken to God. Greater fidelity to duty, meekness, and patience are better indications of a meditation well made than the enjoyment of emotional consolations. God may treat you *now* as beginners; later He will withdraw His sensible presence to accustom you to the less palatable food of self-denial."

Sister Mary Ignatia was ingenious in finding ways of impressing upon the young sisters the sublimity and great dignity of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.—From *Two Kindred Hearts*, by Sister Mary Charlotte, S.N.D., M.A. (Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 1946), page 97.

WE ARE MARY'S CHILDREN

By THE REVEREND JOHN G. DICKSON, S.M., M.A.
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You will agree with me, I know, when I say that the whole world loves a mother for the simple reason, I presume, that the whole world loves being a child. As a result, the deep love found in the mother-son relationship has become legendary and proverbial in the stories of every nation. If this is true of creatures, how much more so is it true of Jesus, the Son of God, and His love for Mary, His Most Holy Mother. Truly we say that such a love is quite beyond the limits of our experience and understanding. However, we add, it is only natural that Jesus should love His mother as completely as He does, because it is natural to love what is pure and beautiful. And Mary, according to spiritual writers, is the purest of creatures and the most perfect created reflection of the divine beauty itself.

Since only the God-Man had the right and privilege of choosing His own mother, no one could have loved a mother more perfectly than He. Jesus chose Mary. Hence no one can have more perfect feelings of devotedness toward her than Christ Himself. Of His thirty-three years on earth, Christ spent only three in the direct service of man, while the first thirty were passed in devoted subjection to His Virgin Mother. He chose to be her Son as completely as possible. He was nursed and cared for by her, He grew up under her guidance, He carried out her slightest wishes, He was always united to her in mind and heart, and now, as King, reigning on high, He will always hear the prayer of His mother, the Queen of Heaven. We marvel at this devotedness of Christ for His Mother, because it is clear to us that Christ, as God, is not obliged to serve and obey Mary. Yet He has chosen to do just that dur-

ing the first thirty years of His life and for all time. He acted thus because His love prompted Him to do so, just as your love for your own mother prompts you to do all that you can to please her.

Love, the Reason

In selecting His mother, Jesus was motivated by love. In the first place, it was love for His heavenly Father. As God-Man, Christ could give great glory to His Father and easily teach us to know and love the Father better. Secondly, Christ was motivated by His love for all mankind, since His only purpose for taking His body from His mother was to restore mankind to a state of friendship with God. And lastly, Christ acted out of love for the Blessed Virgin herself. The reasons for this love are easy to understand; for Jesus loves His mother because she is a creature of great excellence and one who gives Him more joy by the least of her thoughts than all the saints give Him by their most heroic acts. He loves her because she returns His love more perfectly than all the angels and blessed in heaven and, moreover, by becoming His Mother, the Blessed Virgin willingly accepted a painful martyrdom; she agreed to follow her Son through life, knowing that the awful agony of Calvary was coming closer day by day. You must realize now that this great love of Jesus for Mary and of Mary for Jesus is the real reason why Christ became the Virgin's Son. All those wonderful gifts and privileges He gave her can be explained only by His love for her.

Love, you see, is a virtue which makes us want to act, to do things for the one we love. Therefore, we cannot claim to have a true love unless there is service and sacrifice. That is why you want to do things for your mother and father, for your friends, and the people you care for a great deal. It is just your love for them seeking an expression in some sensible way. This explains the true meaning of the relationship between Jesus and the Blessed Virgin. Hence any study of this relationship must begin with a study of Christ's love for His Mother.

Filial Love Outstanding

When we set out to imitate Christ, this devotedness to His Mother presents itself to us as the most outstanding trait in the character of the Son of God. In our study of Christ we find that under whatever virtue we choose to think of Jesus, we must always come back to this: that it is the Son of Mary whom we contemplate, it is the Son of Mary on whom we meditate. There is nothing that would please Jesus more than our reproducing this son-like love for His Virgin Mother in our own relations with her. Certainly we cannot find a more noble way of life to follow than that led by our divine Model with His Blessed Mother. But is it possible to attain such a high ideal? Yes, for such a way of life is pursued by the religious of the Society of Mary (Marianists) who consecrate themselves to Mary as her special sons by a perpetual vow in order to imitate this devotion of Christ, the Son, to Mary, His Mother. The Marianists call this characteristic devotion of theirs "*filial piety*."

Questions Arise—Filial Piety and Catholic Teaching

We have just stated that this perfect imitation of Christ's filial devotedness to His Holy Mother is the special trait of a religious order. That immediately prompts two questions: Is this devotion so well founded on the teaching of the Catholic Church that it can serve as the outstanding feature of a religious society? and, do we mean to limit this devotion to the Brothers of Mary (Marianists)? Let us answer them, one by one.

That Christ chose the Blessed Virgin for His own mother is clear to all of us who understand the true meaning of Christmas. Following His example, we choose this same mother in order to be more perfectly like Him. We likewise know that Christ chose to become a Man and Our Lady's Son for one reason only—to bring mankind back to God; and as for us, if we ever hope to become a perfect imitation of Christ, we must also become sons of Mary for this same purpose, the salvation of the world. For it is certain that unless we wear out our hearts and souls in

the work of restoring the world to Christ, we cannot claim to be following in His divine footsteps, nor can we claim to be true sons of His mother. Our filial devotion to Mary, then, has its roots in the two chief truths of our holy religion, the Incarnation of Christ and the redemption of man.

Mary in Catholic Dogma

Mary became our mother not in a vague mystical manner but in a way somewhat similar to that by which we became sons of our natural mothers. Just as we were born physically of our natural mother after having been conceived and nourished in her body till we could live by ourselves, so Mary conceived and nourished us spiritually and finally gave birth to us in a spiritual manner. Let us examine this more closely.

In the first place, when the Blessed Virgin agreed to become the mother of Christ, she agreed likewise to become our mother. This is how it came about: We may say that at Nazareth our Blessed Mother conceived us spiritually in her chaste womb at the same time that she conceived the physical body of the God-Man. By her study of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the life and work of Christ, the Holy Virgin knew that by answering "Yes" or "No" to the angel Gabriel, she would either give us spiritual life with Christ or leave us in the death of original sin. She said "Yes" to God's request in order that we might live the life of Christ, the life of grace which God had destined for us from all eternity. She realized that Christ had chosen her for His mother so that He could redeem us from Adam's sin and give our souls this new life of grace. Mary said "Yes" because through Jesus she wanted to help bring us to our new spiritual life, just as our earthly mothers helped bring us to our physical life. By her consent to the angel, we say that Mary conceived us spiritually at Nazareth.

But conception is not birth. A period of time separates one from the other in both our physical and spiritual lives. We were freed from the bonds of sin by Christ's death on the cross, because by His death, Christ conquered Satan and destroyed his empire of sin. Thus Christ merited for us the life of sanc-

tifying grace. But He accomplished this in union with His sorrowing mother, for she had conceived Him as the Victim for our sin; she had nursed and brought Him up for this supreme sacrifice, and when the awful moment arrived, she, united with Him in suffering, offered Him to the Heavenly Father for our salvation. Thus on Calvary's heights were we born spiritually of our Blessed Mother. And so it is true to say that this virgin who had experienced only joy at the birth of her first-born Son gave birth to us, her spiritual children, in the midst of the most terrible sufferings.

Jesus wanted to insist on the Blessed Virgin's spiritual motherhood when He confided John to Mary and Mary to John in those beautiful words: "Woman, behold thy son," and "Behold thy mother" (John 19, 26 f.). By these words Christ did not then and there create that motherhood, as though it had never existed before, but rather He announced it, confirmed it, and crowned it at the most solemn hour of His life, the hour in which Our Lady, having given us spiritual birth, was best able to understand her position as mother of men.

As we have seen, on Calvary Our Blessed Mother gave us all a right to live spiritually, but when we received the waters of baptism on our heads, she actually brought this supernatural life to us. When we were born of our natural mothers, we were spiritually dead because of original sin which blackened our souls. In order that we might obtain the spiritual life, sanctifying grace was infused into our souls at the baptismal font. This grace, as all others, came to us through Mary, because in giving birth to Christ, the holy virgin gave birth to the source of all graces, and Christ, as it were, handed over to His mother the key of His spiritual treasury and directed that she distribute all His graces to her other children. Thus, when we were transformed from a child of the devil to a child of God by the waters of baptism, it was our Blessed Mother who gave us birth to that divine life, and it is through her motherly care that we obtain further grace to preserve and develop this life of God in us. It is true to say, then, that the

Church's teaching concerning the mediatrix of all graces has a definite place in our devotion of filial piety. Even in heaven Christ keeps in mind that He is her Son and He will always yield to His mother's desires with a perfect filial devotedness.

Based on the Mystical Body

We hear much these days about the need of being "social-minded." The Church has the answer to this need in her teaching on what society should and should not be. That answer is the social doctrine of the mystical body, which has been brought forth as the remedy for the ills of the present-day world by His Holiness, Pope Pius XII. Filial piety has a vital relation with this social doctrine. By this we mean that it leads us to realize our obligations toward God and our fellow men and turns us away from constantly thinking of ourselves.

There are two reasons why this devotion is social. In the first place the more we become united to Christ, the more active we become as members of the mystical body of which He is the head, and the more freely will His precious blood flow through both head and members. Then we will love our Blessed Mother because Christ loves her, in the way Christ loves her and with the self-same love with which Christ loves her? Why will this be so? Because Christ will be living and acting in us united in His mystical body. In the second place, the more intimately we become one with Him in His mystical body, the more completely will we devote ourselves to the work of Christ, the salvation of our neighbor. Our love for Christ cannot remain an idle emotion; it must seek expression in service. This is just another way of saying that we cannot be satisfied with a self-centered holiness, but we are compelled to make others holy also because we are other Christs.

In the above paragraphs we have pointed out the answer to the first question. We have shown how Christ's son-like devotion to His Blessed Mother is rooted in the bedrock of the teaching of the Catholic Church. No one can go wrong in

honoring Mary in this way, for it is Christ's own way of acting toward His mother. Now let us look at the second question.

The Second Question

We have said that the members of the Society of Mary (Marianists) claim the imitation of Christ's filial piety toward Mary as the mark or sign by which they differ from all other religious orders in the Church, but certainly they by no means hold this devotion exclusively for themselves. Anyone can strive to love Mary in Christ's way. In fact nothing would please the heart of Christ more than to see the world in general practicing this filial piety toward His holy mother. There are many ways in which we may practice this Christlike love for our heavenly mother, or maybe it would be better to say that there is only one way (Christ's way), but there are many levels on which we can imitate Christ's devotion to His mother.

We can never leave off being a child of our heavenly mother. After baptism we are hers for "keeps"! We may not be conscious of our filial bond with her, we may even be bad children through mortal sin, but children of the Blessed Virgin we remain. The reason for this difference is quite clear, for in baptism we acquire a certain union with Our Lady which can never be broken. We may compare it with the relationship that always exists between a boy and his natural mother, or a man and the country of his birth. No matter what the boy does, nor how long he is away from her, he is still a son of his mother, and the man in a similar situation is always a native of the land which gave him birth.

Furthermore, when we become so conscious of our sonship that we freely and willingly consecrate ourselves to Mary (for example, in one of her sodalities) we enter into a closer union with our spiritual mother. We are no longer just anybody, but now all our thoughts, words, and actions take on an added meaning because of our act of consecration to Mary. We have entered into a higher state, a closer union with Mary, and this union has a definite effect upon our lives. We can go still another step higher. The man who has dedicated his

entire life to Mary, not by a simple act of consecration but by a vow, is much more closely united to Mary than any of her other children. Such a dedication is made by the Brother of Mary when he takes his vow of stability. The gold ring he wears is an outward sign of his complete consecration. Consequently the entire life of a Marianist is not only consecrated to Mary in this special way, but also receives the merit of a vow made to God Himself.

Thus, you see, there are various degrees of this filial devotedness to Mary which you may choose according to your love and generosity. As a result of this relation to Mary, your life takes on an entirely new meaning for you. Although this meaning is not appreciated by people around you, it is something very real. For filial piety gives you a new reason for action, makes you see the world, your neighbor, and yourself in an entirely new light; we may say that it makes you see them through the eyes of Christ, the first-born son of Mary.

Spiritual Reading

You are what you read. Show me what you read, and I will tell you what you are. We are all deeply influenced by what we read. Reading fills the mind with thoughts. If it is good, the mind is filled with good thoughts. If it is bad, the mind is filled with bad thoughts. The mind is limited. The more good ideas you put into it, the less room there is for anything bad. Spiritual reading, or the reading of pious books, has always been recognized as a great help to sanctity. Thereby you not only fill the mind with good and prayerful thoughts, but you learn what to do and how to act in a given set of circumstances.—From *Advice for Boys*, by The Reverend T. C. Siekmann (Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., New York, 1947), page 72.

SEEK THE SOURCE: FIND AND FOLLOW

By SISTER M. FLORENCE FEENEY, O.S.B.
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We read in the Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on "Christian Education of Youth":

The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to coöperate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, that is, to form Christ Himself in those regenerated by baptism, according to the emphatic expression of the Apostle: "My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4, 19). For the true Christian must live a supernatural life in Christ, "Christ . . . who is your life" (Col. 3, 4), and display it in all his actions: "that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. 4, 11).

His Holiness indicates that the very core of Christian education is religion, and religion is life—supernatural life, the life of Christ. Sanctifying grace, our life in Christ, was gratuitously bestowed on us through the merits of the Saviour's suffering and death. Through the Holy Spirit whom Christ sent we become members of the mystical body of Christ.

Aim Is Formation of "Other Christs"

The aim of religious education is the formation of "other Christs," a terminology used by the early Christians. For Christ said, "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly" (John 10, 10). This life is more than the mind of man can fathom. St. John sums it up thus: "He that hath the Son, hath life. He that hath not the Son, hath not life" (1 John 5, 12).

The presence of God in man, through baptism, is more than the mere presence of God everywhere. If we ourselves could recognize and appreciate this great grace of God within us, we could the more readily teach its meaning. Plus beautifully explains this idea in his book, *God Within Us. Radiating*

Christ, by the same author, has a similar theme: reflections on the dynamic influence of one who has caught the spirit of life in Christ.

Modern religious education (as many current publications are bemoaning) has not had that "living in Christ" effect. Father Kilian Hennrich stresses the necessity of spiritualizing the student:

Close observers of modern trends in American youth cannot fail to detect many things that are good and commendable. At the same time they will notice characteristics that are dangerous to faith and morals and harmful to the general welfare of Church and country. Among the more pronounced dangerous trends are a spiritual emptiness, a wrong view of life values, indifference to duties, and an apparent failure of youth to recognize that spiritual matters and supernatural truths are of very real significance. On the other hand, religious observances and practices have been increasing among the young and the old. However, generally speaking, it seems that too many are living *with* faith instead of *by* faith. But "the just man liveth *by* faith," and to live merely *with* faith is evidently not sufficient (Gal. 3, 11).¹

Two Classes of Catholics Turned Out by Schools

Our schools turn out two classes of Catholics. One group has had from eight to sixteen years in a Catholic school, yet the majority of these have a very limited knowledge of the meaning of "living their life in Christ." Daily should a real Catholic increase in the growth and knowledge and love of God. Studying religion should be a course from the cradle to the grave. In every other profession, man makes unbounded efforts daily to improve himself. Yet this class of otherwise intelligent persons seem to think that when they leave school they have sealed their capacity of learning to "put on Christ." Therefore, we have weekly weaklings, who probably attend Mass, but do not hear Mass.

The second group are the ignorant Catholics. Many times this ignorance is culpable. This type can be best illustrated by an episode which took place in a near-by Catholic school. A little girl enrolled in the fifth grade at mid-semester. She

¹ Kilian J. Hennrich, O.F.M., *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (January, 1941), p. 362.

came in order to make her First Holy Communion. In the course of events, the child told her teacher she had a sister in the seventh grade at the public school. The Sister naturally asked if she did not think the older sister would like to come to the Catholic school. The child innocently replied, "Oh, but she has made all her things."

It is evident that we have not instilled in our religious education, *life*. What the majority of our pupils have taken away with them has *not* been: (1) Religion is life, and it is a service of love. (2) Love must be fed like fire, otherwise the flame flickers, goes out, or at best, a glimmer of light glows under embers of have-to service. To many, religion means obligations and prohibitions, "do this," "don't do that."

Christ Taught New Law that God Is Love

Christ came on earth and gave us the direct knowledge that God is love. When the scribes asked Christ which was the first commandment of all, St. Mark records the answer thus: "And Jesus answered him: The first commandment is, Hear O Israel: the Lord thy God is one God. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like to it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12, 29-31). Christ promulgated the new law of love. In the Old Law, man had served God principally through fear. Man had not had the opportunity to know God personally. Our Saviour pleaded most touchingly at times with man for his love. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15, 13).

Repeatedly down through the ages, Christ has appeared and begged for recognition of His love from men. In the sixteenth century, Christ appeared to St. Margaret Mary and pleaded with man for a return of His love.

Behold this Heart which has so loved men that it has spared nothing, but has been poured out totally and consumed as proof of its love; and

for gratitude I receive from the greater part only ingratitude, by their acts of irreverence and sacrilege, and by the coldness and the contempt they have for me in this sacrament of love. But what touches me closest is that the very hearts which are consecrated to me act thus.²

The question arises: How can we best know and serve God? The God-Man answered this when He said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14, 6), and again, "learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart" (Matt. 11, 29). And, "A new commandment I give unto you: that you love one another, as I have loved you" (John 13, 34). And how has Christ loved us? We must study His life to answer this question.

Study Life of Christ from Primary Sources

In other fields of knowledge, primary sources are considered the only authoritative material. Why not study the life of Christ from primary sources? Ellamay Horan, in an article in the JOURNAL OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION, says:

Religious writers, through the ages, have exhorted Catholic men and women to read the Gospels. They have always attested to the power of Scripture in the formation of a religious character. The simplicity of Christ's life as told in the New Testament and the omission of extraneous detail commend themselves to us. But over and above these reasons there is the fact that the Gospels contain the best life of Christ. They are inspired, and as Cardinal Gibbons wrote: "They are not diluted by human speculation." In the life of the Catholic, readings from the Gospel are repeated experiences. If the youth or adult, during a formal study of the life of Christ and character, acquires the habit of finding a norm for daily conduct in the Gospels, later, the portions from the Gospels read at the Sunday Mass should be reminders and continuations, as it were, of the study the individual previously made.

. . . For instance, one can not expect man to be actuated by principles that he does not understand. Not only must he understand these principles, but he must know how to apply them to his daily life.³

Father McAstocker, in his excellent book, *Friend of Mine*, says:

² Henri Ghéon, *Secrets of the Saints* (Sheed, New York, 1944), p. 270.

³ Ellamay Horan, "Character Training Through the Study of the Life of Christ," JOURNAL OF RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION, Vol. V, No. 5 (Jan., 1935), p. 442.

There is a saying in the *Following of Christ* which deserves to be quoted and pondered over more frequently than is actually done. The sentence is this: "I would rather feel compunction than know how to define it." Similarly, one might say that he would rather live the life of Christ than write a life of Christ. The generality of Catholics and Religious are content to peruse books about the Saviour, to meditate on Him, to pray to Him, but these devotions are performed more as an end in themselves than as a means toward an end—which end is, of course, to know, love, and serve Christ just a little bit better each day. Herein lies our mistake. Spiritual readings are good; devotional prayers, earnestly recited, are good. These exercises were meant primarily as paths and trails leading us, as the star did the wise men, to the feet of the Master. If they do not accomplish this, the *raison d'être* is frustrated....

In like manner, instead of reading so much about the Saviour, if we would pick up the New Testament frequently and see Christ as He walks through those pages, our knowledge and intimacy with Him would increase a hundredfold.⁴

Learning the Virtue of Humility

Volumes have been written on the virtue of humility. Yet, how much better we would know the virtue, if we would meditate on how Christ reacted in humiliating circumstances, e.g., when He was given no water to wash His feet. How do we react when no consideration is given us?

Could we not introduce into the high school a program whereby each day of each of the four years, the students would read some portion of the New Testament? Not a few high schools have one year of study given to the life of Christ. This is generally a text compiled from Biblical sources with explanations suitable for high school level. In another year the New Testament is studied. This is all good, but it is not enough. Place a New Testament in the hand of every child on his entrance into high school, and let it be the source from which he draws his "life" vitamin daily.

Religious, eminent for their holiness, argue that the study of Holy Scripture should be made in a prayerful way. Here now would be a chance to get in a few minutes of mental

⁴ David McAstocker, *Friend of Mine* (Bruce, Milwaukee), pp. 44-46.

prayer, and teach the students how to pray. St. Benedict in his rule says, "For what page or what utterance of the divinely inspired books of the Old and the New Testament is not a most exact rule of human life?"⁵ True, the Gospels are not written in chronological order, yet, let not too great an interval pass until one book is completely read. When read consecutively, the specific theme of each Gospel can be followed, e.g., St. Mark's theme was to prove the divinity of Christ through His miracles. There is a definite understanding gleaned, and a continuity of thought presented, which could not be otherwise obtained. This is a personal observation, as I tried it out in class. Of course, it may not be workable for all groups.

Reasons for Reading Scriptures and Lives of Saints

A letter to Gregory of Nazianzus by Basil, about A.D. 358, expresses the twofold reason for reading the Scriptures and the lives of the saints:

A most important path to the discovery of duty is also the study of the divinely-inspired Scriptures. For in them are not only found the precepts of conduct, but also the lives of saintly men, recorded and handed down to us, lie before us like living images of God's government, for our imitation of their good works.⁶

Many unique ways to fix the ever-wandering minds can be applied. For instance, John may be responsible for everything said by or about St. John. At the end of reading one Gospel, he will give a report. When the entire four books have been finished, he can give a comparative report, or one more fully developed. The same can be done with the different Biblical characters.

Teachers must first learn to love the Scriptures in a positive way. We cannot give what we do not have. This love must be personal. The fruitfulness of this love, on the part of the teacher, is shown in her attitude toward her pupils.

⁵ Rule of St. Benedict, Chap. LXXIII.

⁶ Saint Basil, Letter II, Basil to Gregory.

In an address to the Catholic Education Association at Sydney, by Archbishop Sheehan, His Grace referred to the fable of the crab:

The old mother crab, giving instructions to the young one, said: "Now, my child, remember when you are walking that you must always walk straight."

"Very well, mother," replied the young crab. "You show me how to do it."

"But," added His Grace amid laughter, "The old crab could not do it. No crab can."

I make an appeal that we teachers daily read the New Testament. There is a fascination about reading the Bible. If we are to be "other Christs" and form "other Christs" by our teaching, we must know Christ. First, and foremost, study the biography of the Man-God from original sources.

In conclusion, will you accept the daily challenge to read the Scripture for a period of ten minutes? At the end of the year, you will not only have acquired the love of the Word of God, but you will unconsciously radiate Christ in your classroom.

⁷ John T. McMahon, *Building Character from Within* (Bruce, Milwaukee, 1939), p. 7.

BY THEIR SPEECH YOU SHALL KNOW THEM

*By SISTER ANITA MARIE JOCHEM, O.S.F., M.A.
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In the mind of the adolescent what one *says* is much more vital to life than what one does. The fellow-student who has a "smooth line," who is in the "groove" conversationally, who can keep the "coke gang" at the corner going indefinitely after school hours on the special topics of conversation: men or movies, fun or food—that is the one who rates. Clothes are only second to the power conversation can hold over one's friends and one's enemies.

Into this adolescent scene can we introduce Christ, the Master Speaker of His hour and theirs? How much they would then revere the Christ who lived two thousand years ago and who still lives today so realistically in them, His Church. In grade school, those same boys and girls had been made aware of the living Christ through the dialog Mass, the beautiful way Christ wishes His children to speak to Him in public worship. Gradually the development of the comprehensive doctrines of the life of grace and membership in the mystical body have been unfolded to them.

Study of Christ for Adolescents

With the adolescent years comes a veritable invasion of diverse interests. New avenues, diverting and distracting, challenge their minds. Unwittingly they are confronted with confusing problems. Who has all the answers? Who will be the leader in this mirage of fluctuating values? Who will show them by word and life the smooth way, the happy way to living?

A study of Christ as a conversationalist is one answer. As Catholic teachers, especially of high school students, this is one aspect of Christ that might be overlooked. We might stress

the Christ of dogma and ethics and theology, but do we delineate to them the Christ of social conversation, the Christ who came to give and did give them a code that is cognizant of their "jive and coke-room chatter"? No one in any stage of life is so adept at repartee as are adolescents; yet no one needs guidance and idealism in "talk" as do the teen-agers. To whom can we better direct their gaze and their ideals for "smooth" talk than to Christ, the Master of repartee, the one Man in the world who knew what to say, and when to say it, and how to say it?

Purposes of the Study

A study of Christ the Speaker as depicted in the Gospels will be twofold: (1) facility to speak with something of the clarity that is Christ's; and (2) knowledge of the Speaker Himself.

The first purpose might be achieved by studying Christ as portrayed in the Gospel of St. Matthew. Freshmen would understand the terse, matter-of-fact style of the repartee as depicted by St. Matthew's writing. Sophomores would cheer the synthetic catechesis of St. Peter as St. Mark embodied it in his Gospel. The nuances of delicate phrases St. Luke caught in his Gospel, juniors would appreciate. As the Church closes the Mass with the first chapter of St. John, what more precious heritage to give to graduates than the superb, brilliant, and lovable Christ St. John started to portray as the "Word"? Thus Catholic adolescents might be started on a lifelong study of Christ, who alone, by His principles, can aid them in discerning truth from error, fact from propaganda.

An introduction to the Christ of repartee might be made through the personality angle. The latest new Catholic periodical, *Today*, Dale Carnegie, Maureen Daly, and her sister, Sheila, down to the Hearst syndicate, all are daily building up a strategy for youth and its world on the basis of personality. They know that "personality" spells everything for the adolescent. Who could "fill the bill" better than Christ?

Only a personality alert and in love with life and with the

myriad personalities that have their hour upon its stage could cope with the repercussions of personality upon personality. Of all men who walked this earth, Christ, the God-Man, He who set the human emotions in key to the loveliness of life, as well as to its sordidness, could truly understand the impacts from conflicts of environment, heredity, and temperament that reach out into speech. Intimately He knows the passions and desires, the thwarting and fulfilling of each human heart. Just as personally does He summon His wit and repartee, sympathy, and understanding when human speech tries to grasp for words to measure its need of Him. Among His friends, He numbered a Paul and a Peter, a Magdalene, and a Mary, a young girl in sin and a young man with dreams, a miser and a tax-collector, gay crowds and suave diplomats. He knew them all! And what kind of a Man did they meet?

What Christ Said to His Friends

A thorough study of *what Christ said to all these friends* should answer that last question. That study can begin with motivating the student to interest in the word battle about to take place: the brilliant battle of Wisdom Incarnate about to spar with poor, proud, human subtlety.

To set the stage for the battle we might let the high school student delve somewhat into the background, political, social, and economic, of the people with whom Christ is to tilt in so many word battles. Books such as *A Commentary on the New Testament*,¹ would prove challenging and rewarding for even a minimum of student interest.

The repartee of Christ has a twofold aspect. It is pungent and filled with terse statements. That is clearly compensated for when one remembers the type of people Christ was addressing. Theirs was a mind attuned by oral Oriental education to grasp through the memory and imagination the lesson to be learned. The lilies of the field, the pearl, the spoonful of meal, the seed of mustard; rains and floods, sun

¹ Published by the Catholic Biblical Association; or *A Companion to the New Testament*, by John E. Steinmueller, S.T.D., S.Scr.L., and Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J., Ph.D. (Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., New York, 1944).

and wind, grass and birds, fig trees and leaven and cockle—all tangible things of life—Christ hinged His speech on these. He knew perfectly how to adapt His profound teachings to their simple minds. They found Him simplifying still further their simplicity in the subject matter of His quick retorts. "To make an impression," the modern wit appeals to an intellectual nexus, to a psychological association of ideas. Here, however, there was never a straining after effect or a heaping of words. Christ took the very words of the scribe or apostle, Sadducee or disciple, and built up a conversation, quick, sparkling, and incisive, that faced power or weakness, majesty and humility with the same composure and poise and stark simplicity. (Our first code rule: clearness and simplicity in speech.)

As an example of how this project could be advanced we might consider the repartee Christ used with His friends and enemies in the Gospel of St. Matthew. This evangelist has his own matter-of-fact mind projecting onto the life of Christ. Hence, this Gospel, possibly more than any other, lends itself to a study of the ready wit, yet profound thought of the Word of God.

Surely there is no question of the pedagogical value inherent in this study. As progress is made from incident to incident, an appreciation of the dignity, fairness, and simplicity of Christ's speech can be slowly inculcated. The study of Christ is a life-time assignment. Precipitant results might anticipate failure.

One Way of Studying Christ's Repartee

What follows is an analysis of how a study of the repartee of Christ might be handled. This is only one way. It can be as diversified in its approach and application as the meditation, penetration, and originality of the teacher and student permit.

The very prelude of Christ's public life really sounded the keynote of how turbulent would be His conflict with the powers of darkness. Christ's intellectual duel with the evil

powers at the beginning of His public life foreshadows the conflict with Satan's minions which He was about to encounter. "And the tempter coming said to him: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."

The majesty of Christ flashes in reply: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4, 3f.)

Is youth not often challenged to use glib phrases of lax principles to secure a dubious job that means "easy money"? Christ's reply should be to them a beacon light and a stabilizing force.

The second temptation, that of presumption on the protection of God, calls forth: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matt. 4, 7). The devil tries to persuade adolescents to "overplay" their family position, their talents, their athletic ability, or their social advantages. Analysis of Christ's attitude would coördinate those advantages with their intrinsic nobility as members of Christ's mystical body.

Finally, the false promise of the devil, on condition that He adore him, calls to the mind of Christ the word of His heavenly Father to the Jews in the time of Moses: "The Lord Thy God shalt thou adore; and him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4, 10). The realization of the priority of the divine over all things human has to become a permanent part of every adolescent's outlook on life.

Christ's Preliminary Lesson on Repartee

Christ Himself gave a preliminary lesson on the theory of repartee when He sent His twelve apostles on their first mission. Bluntly He reminded them, "Freely have you received: freely give . . . Be ye therefore wise as serpents and simple as doves" (Matt. 10, 8, 16). When trouble of persecution and arrests and imprisonments would threaten their apostolic peace, He warned, "take no thought how or what to speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you" (Matt. 10, 19 f.). Once adolescent lives become

Christocentric, their social conversation shall ring with security and conviction.

Talking to the crowds that thronged His Galilean journeys, Christ was aware that His words, too, although coming from Wisdom Itself, would be weighed and found wanting. His was uncompromising speech in which He tossed off mysteries with sureness and clearness. Nothing "more instinct with genuine originality" in human speech had ever been more complete, more consistent in form and content for man's heart and mind than the parables. Yet, after the graphic parables of the sower and the cockle, the mustard seed, the leaven, and the net cast into the sea were questioned by the crowd that sat at His feet, He merely commented: "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house" (Matt. 13, 57).

On the eve of His passion, Philip, one of the twelve, begged, "show us the Father; and it is enough for us" (John 14, 8). Throughout His life, in His words, sometimes slow, sometimes fast, Christ had been doing that. But the repartee of the God-Man had been lost, at least for a while, in time—on these, His closest friends in life. And He had been so simple about it all, building His words out of their words. Peter, mending his nets, is told that he will now be a fisher of men. The scribe, leaning over the portico, begs, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou shalt go" (Matt. 8, 19).

A broad statement, and the Master catches it up in His retort: "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air nests: but the son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8, 20). Certainly adolescent enthusiasm must be fixed or built on the solid foundation of truth whose principles must be verified in their lives.

Christ Understood Human Weakness

For every human weakness His heart reached out. He understood needs, and in chiseled and measured words, He solved them. It is dusk; the crowd is large; the apostles would dismiss the hungry for the evening. Their Leader had given

spiritual food; that was sufficient. Christ, aware of their difficulty, remarked: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Dull and slow on the "uptake" of their Leader, the apostles interpreted Him literally, but Jesus knowing it said: "Why do you think within yourselves, O ye of little faith, for that you have no bread?" (Matt. 16, 6, 8). He begged them to remember the multiplication of loaves, once among five thousand, once four thousand. He substantiated His repartee with miracles.

Yet the ideologies of modern Pharisees and Sadducees, propagated with magnificent rhetoric, await countermanding by these teen-agers. As students of the greatest Speaker, there are many techniques of oral Catholic Action that can be developed. They might include some of the following: debates, symposiums, extemporaneous speaking, introductions, acting as chairman at proceedings, oral synopses of portions of the late encyclicals, digests of significant editorials and magazine articles from such dynamic Catholic thought as: *Today, Commonweal, America, Catholic Mind, Sign* and *Catholic Digest*.

Keenest Invectives at Peter

At Peter, it was, however, that He hurled His keenest invectives. Only a Peter, son of Jona, could take them. As He warned His apostles of His coming Passion, Peter felt it incumbent upon him to rebuke the Master: "Lord, be it far from thee, this shall not be unto thee" (Matt. 16, 22). And Christ hurled back at him, "Go behind me, Satan, thou art a scandal to me." Then turning deferentially to the others, the now meek Christ invited, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16, 22 f.). Later to Peter the same tenor of repartee is given when he asks: "Lord, how often shall my brother offend against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?"

Vehemently comes the rejoinder: "I say not to thee, till seven times; but till seventy times seven" (Matt. 18, 21 f.). Here, in kaleidoscopic succession, kindness, severity, and justice are embodied in Christ's speech.

The kindness in Christ's repartee only urged others to petition for mercy and relief. As to the leper and the pagan general, so to those who truly loved and tried to believe, Christ's repartee was as manna from heaven to soul and body. To the other camp of that day and this, it had the biting brilliance and cutting sarcasm that fell indeed on the stony ground of deliberate unbelief and foolish hatred of the One who came to save. Here it might be pointed out to adolescents that as Christ did not compromise in presenting His way of life, so they, too, cannot deviate in choosing between the principles of diplomacy and those of sincerity.

Blindness of intellect can bring an embarrassing predicament, as the chief priests and scribes showed when they questioned the Supreme Teacher as to the authority by which He had preached in the temple. Jesus calmly answered: "I also will ask you one word, which if you shall tell me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things" (Matt. 21, 24). A poised request for an audacious answer! He counter-questioned them on their beliefs. It was all so unexpected, and yet so imperative in demanding a reply. Unknowingly He was also reading their minds and in an intellectual battle of wits answered their thoughts and presented them with two parables. "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they knew that He spoke of them" (Matt. 21, 45).

They had unsheathed their weapons against Him, but He beat them from their hands and turned them against themselves in a last desperate struggle for their very souls' salvation. He quoted their own unobserved laws to them, their own unread Scriptures, and their own unused traditions. Against such masterly repartee there was no reply. Can our adolescents be eloquent, or even vocal enough to crystallize in forceful, clear speech, the truths and doctrines of the faith in which they are fifteen or eighteen years old?

No more brilliant, vindictive dialogue is needed than that in the encounter with the sects of His day: Herodians, Saducees, and Pharisees. Then, as now, political flattery and

obsequiousness challenged Christ. "Master, we know that thou art a true speaker." But the uncompromisingly just Christ replies to their question: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22, 16, 21). By the time graduation looms in view, through the words of Christ on such occasions as the above, graduates ought to have a clear conception of their obligations to the State as well as their corresponding and higher obligations to the Church. Christ spoke clearly on all issues in life.

What kind of Man was Christ? The second purpose for a study of the repartee of Christ will gradually be achieved. Surely the clarity of His speech will be as a prism revealing more and more of His beauty and truth. As the mind expands with knowledge and maturity, that first acquaintance with Christ, started through a study of the Gospels and renewed in each participation in the Mass, will culminate in an appreciation of the living Christ, the Church. The Christ, in whom they profess their faith when they say: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord," will be a living Person who is the Church, who dwells in them, who grows with their growth and becomes, through the tragic and happy vicissitudes of life, their Leader and their Master. Personally, they will be on the way to that tremendous activity, the putting on of Christ, *i.e.*, being a Catholic with the full, beautiful awareness of Christlike social living through their speech, which is an echo of His.

TEACHING CHURCH HISTORY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL—WHY?

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It was shown in a previous article that the great majority of high schools do include the study of Church History in their curriculum. Nevertheless, it may not be out of place to review some of the reasons why church history should be included in the program of a Catholic high school. It is not entirely unheard of that teachers are assigned their subject and proceed to teach it without giving much thought to the reason why the subject is included in the curriculum, or the objectives.

Before taking up the place of church history in the high school it might be well to say a word on the teaching of it in the grades. Although Bible history has occupied a place in the Catholic elementary school program for a half century or more, it is only in more recent years that church history has been given much attention. While church history has a place in the elementary school, it also has its limitations due to the mental immaturity of the children. Children on the elementary school level can best understand what is presented to them in the concrete rather than the abstract. Hence, for them, church history should deal largely with the lives of the saints and persons in the Church. In this way church history can be used to build up ideals and to develop a love for the Church. When it comes to understanding the lessons which church history has to teach, this requires somewhat more mental maturity than elementary school children possess.

Reasons for Teaching Church History in High Schools

Why then should church history be taught in the Catholic high schools?

1. *To give the student a better understanding of the develop-*

ment of doctrine. In the elementary school, as well as in the high school, the student has studied the catechism or a text based on the catechism. He has acquired some knowledge of the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Church. It is one thing to know these teachings as presented in the latest edition of a catechism or textbook, as if they had always been so clearly understood and defined. It is quite another thing to see something of the development that has taken place in the doctrine and teachings of the Church. The distinction between what is contained in the deposit of faith and implicitly believed, and what is formally defined as an article of faith takes on a new meaning when, for example, the student studies the Vatican Council and its definition of papal infallibility. The present-day movement to have the Assumption of Mary declared an article of faith will serve as a good illustration of the way in which doctrine develops.

2. *To give the student a better understanding of the nature of the Church.* Today much emphasis is placed on the Church as the mystical body of Christ. It must be admitted that to many Catholics this has little meaning. A study of church history will help to clarify this. In the Scriptures we find narrated the events of the life of Christ while He lived on earth. In church history we have recorded His mystical life as He lives it in the Church. Between the two there are many parallels. While on earth Christ instructed the people. The Church continues His work. The mission work of the Church is but an extension of Christ's going up and down Palestine instructing the people. Some accepted His teachings, others rejected them. It is the same with the Church. When on earth Christ knew the glory of a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, only to be followed by persecution and crucifixion. The Church has had its periods of glorious achievements and it has also known persecution. Thus the study of church history can help the student to understand what is meant by the Church as the mystical body of Christ, by showing the parallel between the life of Christ in His physical body and in His mystical body.

Shows Church as Expanding Institution

In addition church history helps the student to see the Church as an institution developing and expanding as time goes on. There is the internal development of her doctrine, her liturgy, and her hierarchical system; the external development as manifested in her mission work and its civilizing influence on nations, her educational system, charitable organizations of all kinds, her use of the press and radio to carry on her work. Surely a student cannot come into contact with such phases of the Church's development and not have a better understanding of the nature of the Church.

3. *To serve as an apologetic.* This may be considered from two points of view: first, as a means of safeguarding the faith of the student. In a country of mixed religions and utmost freedom of speech and press, a Catholic cannot help coming in contact with arguments against the Church and her teachings. This is especially true of those students who attend non-Catholic colleges and universities. Often the attack is made on the basis of history. Such criticism of the Church should not find the student totally unprepared to meet it. (More will be said on this point later.)

Many Protestants Lack Knowledge of Protestant Origin

As an apologetic church history should help the student to explain the position of the Church to inquiring non-Catholics. Many persons today who are the inheritors of the Protestant tradition have only a vague, or else erroneous notion of how Protestantism originated. I think it was Chesterton who said something to the effect that nine out of ten Protestants do not know why they are Protestant and when they inquire they become Catholic.

Several years ago I was speaking with a lady who for years taught Sunday school in various Protestant churches. She was a person of limited educational background, but had read the Bible extensively and in her own way expounded it to her classes. In the course of our conversation I happened to

mention the Reformation. I could see that she was somewhat puzzled by the term. Further inquiry revealed the fact that she had not the slightest idea of how and when Protestantism and its various sects came into existence. Undoubtedly this would be rather an exceptional case for a Sunday school teacher, but not so exceptional for many nominal Protestants or people of no religious persuasion.

As a means of explaining the Catholic faith, the knowledge of church history alone is not enough. One must know something of the actual doctrines and teachings of the Church. If, however, in addition to the doctrinal teachings of the Church a person has some knowledge of church history he is certainly in a better position to explain the Church to the inquiring non-Catholic.

4. *To give the student a better understanding of some of the problems the Church, and the world face today.* A generation ago a student in a Catholic high school who studied the Eastern schism and the beginnings of the Orthodox Church might have considered it just another chapter in history, one without particular significance today. Now the picture has changed. The daily paper or the latest radio newscast may tell about Russia's using the Orthodox Church for her political ends. Only a few years ago the same government was waging war not only against the Orthodox Church, but all religion.

The Eastern Schism

To understand the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the Soviet government it is necessary to go back to the position the Orthodox Church occupied under the Czars. This leads back to the origin of the Orthodox Church and the Eastern schism. This involves the pagan conception of the extent of the secular power as found in the Roman Empire. The Western Church under the papacy consistently fought the attempts of the secular powers to make the Church subservient to it. In the Eastern Church there was a tendency to submit to state domination even before the schisms; afterwards it became more and more an accomplished fact.

Here we have a case when a movement in the eleventh century in the Church is a direct forerunner of some of the problems the Church and the world face today. When the Catholic student reads in the paper that the Vatican is greatly disturbed over the conditions of the Church in certain traditionally Catholic countries, *i.e.*, Poland, Lithuania, etc., which have come under Russian domination, his knowledge of church history will enable him to understand why the Vatican is concerned.

5. *To give the student confidence in the Church's ability to meet seemingly insurmountable obstacles.* Every student in a Catholic high school is no doubt aware of Christ's promise that the Church will last to the end of time. There is no guarantee, however, that the Church in any one country will continue uninterruptedly, nor that she will always be victorious in her conflict with her enemies.

The early heresies lasted for centuries, Donatism six or seven centuries. Where are all these heresies now? In England the Church was persecuted for centuries, but survived, and it is growing stronger. Protestantism by its own admission is slowly disintegrating. The Church continues to prosper. Truth has life in it. Erroneous religions all stagnate and die, losing their grip upon people. Even schisms after centuries weaken. The Church lives on.

In addition to the "why" of teaching Church history in the high school there are several other questions that might well be considered. The first is, Should the church history course include the so-called scandals which have occurred from time to time in the history of the Church? I, for one, believe that these issues should be frankly faced and dealt with in the course. There is good precedent. The Gospels do not hesitate to tell of the betrayal of Judas, the denial by Peter, and the doubting by Thomas. Leo XIII in opening the Vatican library declared that the Church has nothing to fear from historical truth. It is perfectly true that a scholar going through the archives in a library will come across many items of history, both good and bad, which will never find their way into

high school textbooks. The material in any field of knowledge that can be presented in a high school text is limited. I would certainly not advocate the dragging out of all the dirty linen of the past and putting it into a Catholic church history text. Nevertheless, there are certain items which should be included, if for no other reason than they have been used as an argument against the Church.

Preparation to Answer Objections to Faith

It is especially important that those students who leave Catholic high schools and enter secular colleges and universities be prepared to deal with some of the objections to their faith which they are almost bound to meet. It is not expected that the high school can prepare them to deal with all possible objections, but it can anticipate some of the more or less stock objections, based on history. It is not a good idea for a student to learn for the first time in a non-Catholic college that some popes, cardinals, and other high ecclesiastics were not models of sanctity; that clerical celibacy was not always observed by those who had the obligation; and that the buying of ecclesiastical offices was not unknown in the Church. If the student learns these things for the first time in a non-Catholic college his first reaction may be one of resentment against an attack on his religion. When, however, the evidence is presented and the facts are undeniable, he may begin to wonder if there are other things about the Church that have been kept from him.

If these matters are frankly dealt with in the Catholic high schools they can be presented to the students in their true light, as a natural outcome of the human element in the Church. The student learns from his study of Christian doctrine that the Church is composed of the divine and the human element. As long as the human element is in the Church, we can expect imperfections, but at the same time we can point out that such can never destroy the divine nature of the Church. To be effective we must be specific and not deal merely in generalities. One textbook I recently saw makes a

nice distinction between the human element and the divine element in the Church and tells the reader that he may expect to find scandal in the Church. Yet later on these very things are passed over in such general terms that they would hardly make any impression on the reader, unless, of course, the teacher took time to emphasize these points. On the basis of such treatment in the text the student would hardly be prepared to deal with the usual objections made against the Church.

There is another reason why we should not be afraid to deal with these questions today. We are living in an age and in a country where we can be proud of our Church. Within the memory of the oldest living person the See of Peter has been occupied by men who have been eminently worthy of their high office. They have commanded the respect of non-Catholics as well as Catholics. Our hierarchy, our clergy, brotherhoods and sisterhoods, and the various works carried on by the Church will compare favorably with those of any age in the Church. Hence, we can afford to admit the shortcomings of the past without much fear of having an accusing finger pointed at the Church of today.

How Much Time for Church History?

Another question that may be asked is, How much time should be devoted to church history? This question assumes that church history is taught as a distinct course. As reported in the previous article 63.8% of the schools devote a full year to the subject, 27.0% one semester, and 9.2% less than a semester. Actual practice, however, is not always a criterion on what is the best procedure. Extrinsic factors, such as the amount of material in a text, rather than the nature of the subject matter itself, may determine the amount of time devoted to it. Furthermore, the opinion of the teachers who are teaching the subject may differ from their actual practice. For some ten years in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati a full year has been devoted to church history. A recent survey shows that opinion is equally divided as to the amount of time

that should be given to the subject. Eighteen schools replied to the inquiry. Six said that a full year should be given, six that a half year was sufficient, and the remaining six that less than a semester was sufficient.

No absolute answer can be given to this question of how much time should be devoted to the study of church history. Various factors have to be taken into consideration. For one thing it will make a difference whether a Catholic or a non-Catholic text is used in the study of secular history. A Catholic text will contain a certain amount of material, and from the Catholic point of view, that will come in church history. Another factor will be whether or not all students must take a course in general history. If at least one year of study of general world history based on a Catholic text, is required of all the students, then less time need be devoted to church history. It is my opinion that in such a case one semester should be sufficient to cover the essential points of church history. This assumes that many items in church history can be omitted in a high school course in order to allow one to stress others of greater importance.

Which Year for Church History?

One final question remains. Assuming that church history is taught as a separate subject, in what year should it be taken? The more mature a person is when he studies history the more he will get out of the subject. If church history were taken in the senior year it would no doubt yield the best results so far as the student is concerned. There are, however, practical difficulties that have to be considered. The usual content of the fourth year of religion contains what we might call material dealing with life problems. These too require a certain degree of mental maturity if the student is to get the most out of the course. The fact that for many students the senior year of high school will be the last year of formal education gives an added interest to their study of religion. Hence, it probably would be better to devote the senior year to the study of religion rather than church history.

During the first two years of high school the student has not yet attained the mental maturity to take from church history the lessons that should be learned. This time can be more profitably spent in studying the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Church. The third year, in my opinion, is the most practical time for church history. By this time the student has attained a measure of mental maturity so as to be able to grasp fairly well the points that should be understood; it is a year which is not apt to be so crowded with required subjects and the content of the religion course can be so divided as to fit in before and after this year.

Scope of Character Formation

Now we may proceed to the discussion of problems a chaplain meets in the execution of his duties. His labors, although often detailed, fall under the general term of Christian character formation, for which group work offers additional opportunities. About character formation, some say that this is done before a child enters school. This is not even a half-truth, and is misleading. Some physical and mechanical training was imparted, but a reasonable training for the exercise of virtue is simply impossible at a tender age. Some habits may have been formed and some undesirable emotional traits may have manifested themselves, but they do not yet constitute character. Character embraces a number of qualities and natural urges, good in themselves, but capable of resulting in evil as well as in good. The inclination to evil is, of course, still pronounced in fallen man, and to do good often requires greater efforts.

Here it is where direction and redirection is an obvious requirement. This guidance must follow the nature of the baptized; it must be predominantly supernatural. Character formation is a slow process, and it takes many years before character is stabilized. In fact, it never becomes so rigid that a change for better or worse is impossible at any age.—The late Kilian J. Henrich, O.F.M.Cap., A.M., "The Youth Chaplain's Problems," in *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, April, 1947, pp. 567, 568.

SAINT BEDE—TEACHER OF CHRISTIANITY

Part 2. The Content of Bede's Writings¹

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From the whole of Bede's writings a pattern of spiritual thought emerges, and that pattern has as its main thread consciousness of the Church. Bede saw the Church as a distinct spiritual society through which the soul is incorporated with Christ, is guaranteed in certain beliefs, is given a fixed system of moral ideals, and is aided with special supernatural helps. Just as in method his work is Scriptural, so in content it is ecclesiastical. The grammatical works intended to provide a key to the Church's liturgy and literature. Through the mathematical treatises instruction was given on how to establish and maintain a correct church calendar, so that disciplinary uniformity might be achieved and doctrinal dangers avoided. In even the earliest Biblical commentary, on the Apocalypse, Bede was mainly preoccupied with the idea of the Church. His studies on the Canticle, Esdras and Nehemias, the temple, Proverbs, and especially its last section concerning the valiant woman, interpret them as allegories on the Church. And if the notion of the Church does not predominate in the other Scriptural works, it occupies an important place there. In the *Ecclesiastical History* his short sketches of men and women are concerned in the first place with the problem: "Are they *Catholici*?" Wilfrid for instance was distinguished because he was the first bishop among the Angles who "learned to hand on the Catholic manner of living to the churches of the Angles." Oswy was venerated "because he had understood that the Roman was the Catholic

¹ For fuller development and documentation see Sister M. Thomas Aquinas Carroll, *The Venerable Bede: His Spiritual Teachings* (Catholic University of America Press, 1946).

and apostolic church." With the core of his work thus ecclesiastical, Bede's concepts of the Church are bound to have value.

The fact that the Church loomed so large in Bede's view is in itself impressive and important for us today; it becomes more so when we realize the basic notion behind it—that is, that Bede conceived of Christianity as being necessarily social and corporative. When we encounter such early Christian writings as those of St. Augustine and Bede, we begin to realize how much centuries of stress on individualism have warped our attitudes. We perforce admit to the title of *Christian* anyone who seeks his ideal of life from Christ; to Bede such a concept would be most incomplete, lacking in life. Being a Christian meant for him being a member of Christ's body, being a member of His Church. All approach to God—and that is surely the heart of any religion—required first union with the society of the Church. One could not even pretend to knowledge of Christ without that primary relationship of membership: "No one should think he knows Christ if he is not a member of His body, *i.e.*, the Church." This is true because Christ, the God-Man, has willed to complete His nature, as it were, by the Church (. . .*ipse Mediator Dei et hominum una natura cum Ecclesia sua fieri voluit*). Man, therefore, has importance, has status, has a future only in so far as he is conjoined with Christ: "No one ascends into heaven except Christ in His body, which is the Church."

The Church Mystical

The Church, as Bede here considers it, has a twofold aspect: (1) the visible organization established on earth by Christ for the salvation of men, the "present Church" as Bede is wont to speak of it, and (2) the body of the saints united to God, whether on earth or in heaven. Developing the second, the more mystical sense, Bede defines the Church as follows:

In a general way the whole congregation of the elect is called the Church. But now in a more particular manner, by way of distinction, that part of

the faithful which came before the time of the Lord's incarnation is called the synagogue; that part which followed it is the Church.

We may note here the feeling of close relationship between the pre-Christian Jews and the Christians as two parts of one Church, separated by temporal rather than by basic causal conditions. Before the Law and under the Law Bede considered many souls to have led a perfect life. Therefore they are included in this concept of the Church which, in both its general and particular phases, concerns the state of soul of the elect, of those who "have been called 'saved' by God not only before they were conceived in the womb of the Church through faith, but even before the time of the world." The Church in this sense exists in heaven as well as on earth; in fact its earthly existence is but a shadow of its heavenly life, a temporary sojourning, a pre-participation, through faith, in the delights of the celestial fatherland. It embraces in its membership all the just, even the angels, from the constitution of the world: ". . .there is one Church in all His saints, the same faith of all the elect, that is, of those preceding and those following His coming in the flesh."

But if saints, members of the mystical Church, could be produced even before the coming of Christ, nevertheless, Christ was for them, for all, the sole means of salvation. He alone could open the kingdom of heaven to them. If Moses and the prophets are to be reverenced equally with the apostles, Bede insists, it is because as far as they were able they studied how the Scripture pertained to Christ and to the happiness they hoped to have with Christ. No matter what the date or circumstances of their earthly existence, full justification, membership in His body, the Church, could come only with Christ's entrance into the world, when, as Bede says, "He proceeded from the virginal womb as from His marriage chamber to join to Himself the Church." Until His Church was thus constituted, reward of the faithful could be only in "the bosom of Abraham." But with the completion of Christ's earthly life the just of all ages before and after His coming were incorporated into a new and fruitful union which

drew its power from His merits. The Church is truly, as Bede calls it, Christ's inheritance which He received from His Father upon His death and resurrection. It is the fruit of His redemption.

The Church Visible

In this concept of the Church as "one catholic multitude of all the elect through all places of the world and times of the ages, subject to one God the Father," can clearly be seen the force of the dictum, "The Church is Christ, and Christ is the Church." Equally so is it clear in Bede's view of the visible Church. Just as Christ alone provided salvation for all the elect, so He alone could found the new earthly organ of His work and His merits. It was He who at the Last Supper had ended the old dispensation and substituted the new, who had made entrance into the number of the elect depend normally upon membership no longer in the synagogue but in the visible Church.

As Christ was the Founder so also was He the source of fruitfulness for the new Church. Through His mortal acts, He provided a new spring of life and nourishment for His followers. The side of Christ, opened with a spear, afforded not only a doorway for all to life eternal, but a birthplace of the Church, the source henceforth of spiritual life to souls still on earth, and the channel of His graces to men. Repeatedly in Bede's works he outlines the course of the flow of this life, from the sacred humanity of Christ, through the Church, to the soul which through it is reborn, nourished, and sanctified. Thus Christ willed that the very fruitfulness of His redemption to souls would depend upon the agency of His Church.

In the visible Church Bede saw also the continuation of Christ's authority. Through its hierarchy He saw Christ teaching, binding, loosing, anathematizing, excommunicating. Because of His abiding presence in the Church, it cannot teach or tolerate falsehood. Therefore, any attempts of men to pervert the truth of the Church are veritable attacks upon

Christ Himself. Those who act thus are, like the soldiers of Pilate, soldiers of the devil. They strike His head when they deny Him to be true God; they spit upon His face when they despise the presence of His grace, and deny that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. Hence, heretics are worse than all other sinners, for they rend the union of Christ with His Church, thus destroying the very means of salvation for innumerable of the faithful. Since they break contact with Christ any progress they may seem to make in good works is merely apparent, not real: "The Lord abominates the prayers, works, and sacrifices of heretics, and holds acceptable the vows only of those who affirm with just works the Catholic faith." Yet heretics will never destroy the Church for, though Christ left the Church corporally by His ascension, "He never left it destitute of the protection of His divine presence, remaining in it all days even to the consummation of the world."

Because he saw the relation of Christ to the Church to be so close, Bede passionately defended its unity and universality. Despite his intense patriotism, he gloried that the church of the English nation was one of those "separate groupings of the churches throughout the world which form the one Catholic Church." Angry at his countrymen who "preferred their own traditions to all the churches which throughout the world were in accord with each other in Christ," Bede taught that it was not enough to love God and to keep His commandments if one did not also conform with fraternal charity to the unity of the Church. "He who disturbs the unity of Holy Church which Jesus came to draw together," he wrote, "strives as far as he can to dissolve Jesus."

Hierarchy in the Church

Within the visible Church Bede found it natural that there should be a graded ordering of authority and function, for even from the beginning Christ had determined that His work should be carried on through definitely appointed men. He alone multiplied the bread and fishes, Bede pointedly says, but had them distributed by the apostles. The fruitfulness

of the Church was henceforth to depend upon the complete coöperation of His ministers with Him. "Christ constructs Himself, teaches, governs, and will dedicate to eternal life one Catholic Church by means of various human persons."

These persons were in the first place the apostles, endowed with powers of teaching, judging, and consecrating. They had, by their preaching, laid the foundations of the Church in all parts of the world. Through them the body of the Scriptures took its Christian form, for those twelve established the New Testament, revealed the hidden meaning of the Old, and by their authority strengthened the unanimous concord of the whole. They represented the norm of instruction so that thereafter "each teacher, whether sent to preach to the Jews or the gentiles, takes care to do and to teach those things which Holy Church receives and learns through the apostles." Christ inaugurated the new pasch in their presence, and gave them first the power to celebrate His mysteries and communicate His body and blood. To them were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the power of binding and loosing, of excommunicating and anathematizing from entrance to eternal life. In their council they represented the synodal authority of the Church.

All this was, of course, of no mere antiquarian interest to Bede and the bishops to whom he wrote, for in the apostles had been founded the first order of bishops. To their successors went the powers which they had enjoyed, together with the task of continuing to build the Church until the end of the world. Because of their authority the responsibility for the spiritual life of the whole Church rested upon them. The decrees the bishops passed when assembled in synod, either general or provincial, had binding power. Individually the souls of their people depended on them. Bede felt that the bishop was so closely related to his flock that he would present them before Christ at the last judgment. Only through their care in ministering the sacraments reserved to them, in supervisory and corrective visitation, and in teaching, could the inner life of the Church flourish.

The Priesthood

As an aid to the apostles, Christ had appointed 72 disciples, and Bede recognized in them the inauguration of the second order, the priesthood. On a subordinate level, and within a smaller sphere, they exercised functions and assumed responsibilities similar to those of the bishop. As the Church grew in size and complexity, the priest became more and more the vital worker in saving souls. Below the priests in an order known from apostolic times were the deacons, who in Bede's society often had an important place in the official task of ecclesiastical teaching.

It is incontrovertible that Bede believed special prerogatives to have been given to St. Peter. How extensive he thought these powers to have been is somewhat less clear. Bede understood that any glorification of St. Peter which took away the plenitude of priestly powers from the other apostles and their successors would be false. Yet he distinguishes:

To all the Church of the elect authority of binding and loosing . . . is given. But then blessed Peter . . . received in a special way the keys for the kingdom of heaven and the *principatus judicariae potestatis*, so that all believers throughout the world might understand that those who separate themselves from the unity of his faith and society cannot be absolved from the chains of sin, or enter the door of the heavenly kingdom.

The position of St. Peter then, as Bede saw it, was linked with the unity of the Church. In regard to it he was not merely a symbol, but also an actual safeguard, endowed with special power and possessing a superior status over the other apostles in judicial cases, especially as they might concern unity. His primacy was, therefore, in Bede's eyes, both of honor and of jurisdiction. Clearly enough, adherence to Peter was to be the hallmark of the one, true Church; but, in Bede's age, according to his own expressions, adherence to Peter could only mean adherence to Rome, the see of Peter, and to his successor

in that see. His practical exhortations and historical data on the powers of the various pontiffs do not contradict his theoretical teaching that ". . . through the single parts which compose the one Catholic Church it is joined visibly to the pontiff set over it, but is increased through the invisible power of the Holy Spirit."

Chief among the functions of the Church was the begetting of children unto God, their teaching and nourishment. For this Christ had furnished the grace and power which the ministers in their various spheres were to dispense. In all their work of teaching, ruling, and sanctifying through the sacraments, they must bear in mind how closely their work would interlink with that of Christ: the result of their preaching depends on the grace of God; their voice of decision has authority because it is the voice of God. In the work of nourishment through the sacraments is this union especially manifest. Though the Church has "placed its foundation not otherwise than . . . in the side of Christ and from this side, opened by a lance, it rejoices that the sacraments of blood and water through which it is born and nourished have poured forth," yet it was "to his disciples that the Lord handed over His mysteries to be celebrated." The function which the ministers in the Church perform with reference to the body of the elect is thus fairly well defined: they are, as it were, the neck which joins the body to the head, that is, the Church to Christ.

Membership in the Church

With Christ as the central link between the Church mystical and the Church visible, and the ecclesiastical ministers as the agents of His power, the problem remains as to whether members of the mystical body and of the visible Church are identical. Under the Christian dispensation membership in the visible Church was attained by baptism. As Bede stated it: "No one, unless he is baptized, unless he is united to the body of Christ, shall enter the Church." This had not always been the case, however, for under the old dispensation, justifi-

cation was possible through circumcision. Bede conceived too of the possibilities of salvation on an even broader basis:

...from the beginning of the world even to the time of the circumcision, and among other nations even after circumcision was given, those who pleased God and commended their souls to their Creator through offerings of sacrifices, and certainly through the virtue of faith, were absolved from the chains of the first sin.

Since the coming of Christ the ministrations of the Church are normally necessary to achieve this.

The Lord redeemed us all at the time of His incarnation by His sacred blood in such a way that we also in our time should come individually through the spiritual rebirth of baptism to participation in that same regeneration.

If we study the effects of each of these ways of reaching salvation—through the visible Church or without it, we shall see better how much fuller was the giving of Christ through the Church.

To the circumcised as to the baptized soul the negative effect of Christ's redemption, the destruction of the power of Satan, imparted a personal liberty, release from the snares of sin, a redemption from the servitude of the devil. The yoke of original sin was lifted once and for ever. But beyond this, it is baptism which completely changes a person's status: from dwelling in the mountain of pride he moves to the house of the Lord; from being a member of the body of the devil, he becomes a member of the Church, united integrally to all the body of believers, and a member of Christ, not merely at some time after his death but even during the course of His life. Baptism relates him in a new and more intimate manner to the three persons of the Blessed Trinity, granting him *the grace of adoption of sons* (Gal. 4, 5): "There can be no greater reward than that the earth-born sons of men should be made the sons of the Most High who is in heaven." It makes him through his rebirth a son of the Father, a member of Christ the high priest, and the dwelling-place, the temple of the Holy Spirit. Through this new-found freedom and these newly

established relations, the soul enters upon a life of new opportunity. It is in a fit state for the reception of further graces through the other sacraments. It is in a position to exercise the new gifts of faith, hope, and charity, to accomplish good and meritorious works through the graces afforded it in its changed state. It lives now on a higher level, for it is but a pilgrim and a wayfarer in this world, and a citizen of a higher life. A different life-principle, that is, grace, animates it, which, if nourished and not impeded, will carry it on triumphantly to the vision of eternal glory.

But One Way to Church Mystical

Despite all these tremendous advantages, however, not all the baptized are members of the elect, for there are Catholics in name only, and there are "bad Catholics." Therefore no absolute equation exists between the membership of the Church visible and the Church mystical. Yet while recognizing this Bede continued to insist that, since the incarnation of Christ, there is but one way to the Church mystical—union with the Church visible through faith and baptism.

Thus Bede reconciled his vision of his "holy mother" in the visible form of the Roman, catholic, apostolic Church established on earth by Christ, and in the invisible form of the mystical body of Christ gathered from the faithful from the beginning of the world. Even as he beheld the intricate workings of the hierarchical order in teaching, conferring grace, and protecting truth, he saw beyond them the larger view of the eternal Church for which these provided the entrance. He was truly convinced that the first requisite of a spiritual life was membership in the Church mystical through the agency of the earthly Church. How refreshingly clear sounds Bede's whole message in this point which is so largely lost sight of by weak Catholics today!

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS—ABRAHAM: THE FATHER OF MANY

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As we discuss various Biblical characters the background into which they fit must not be forgotten. These men and women, in one way or another, were part of the divine plan for the preparation of men for the coming of our Blessed Lord. This divine plan had been revealed to Adam and Eve; it was carried on by Seth, Enos, and others down to Noe, as chapter five of the book of Genesis reveals. Noe passed it on to his son Sem, who in turn handed this Messianic plan to his son, Arphaxad; if we continue this line we reach Thare, the father of Abram (for thus is his name given in the beginning of the account concerning him). Chapter eleven of Genesis gives us these names. These men were not only the recipients of the divine plan of mercy for all men; they were also the ancestors of our Lord, as St. Luke (3, 34-38) confirms in the genealogy of Jesus, the son of Joseph. Up to Abram God's plan was accepted and handed down by individuals; now however, about two thousand years before the Christian era, this plan was to involve a nation. Abram was the father of the nation; it is no wonder then that Moses, writing for this nation, gave such a long account of this great man. Great he was; in fact one of the greatest, if not the greatest, character in the Old Testament.

Beginning of the Story of Abram

The story of Abram began in Ur of Chaldea, today an excavated ruin in Iraq, about twelve miles from the river Euphrates; the time was the twentieth century before Christ. Abram was the son of Thare; as the Scriptural account opens we learn that he was married to Sarai, his half-sister (if we ac-

cept Genesis 20, 12 strictly), or his niece (if we accept some Jewish and Christian sources, which will be discussed in a separate article on Sarai). "And Sarai was barren, and had no children" (Gen. 11, 30). This terse statement covers what must have been a great sorrow in the life of Abram, until God removed this barrenness. Abram remained in Ur until his father took the entire family "to go into the land of Chanaan. And they came as far as Haran and dwelt there."

With an abruptness that is frequent in the pages of Sacred Scripture we are told of the Lord's command to Abram (Gen. 12, 1-3): "Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father's house, and come into the land which I shall show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and magnify thy name, and thou shalt be blessed. I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, and *in thee shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed.*" Abram was called upon by God to make some tremendous sacrifices: first of all, he was to leave his native land; secondly, he was to leave his relatives; thirdly, he was to go forth from his father's house, that is, he was to break his family ties, which were so strong in the Orient; lastly, he was to go into a strange country, albeit one which God would designate. But if God asks sacrifices He gives in return, abundantly and in heaping measure. Abram was to sever his patriotic relations; in turn he would become a great nation. He was to break family relations; in turn he would be blessed by God. Greatest of all, however, Abram was to belong to God; in turn he would belong to all the world, because through him all peoples would be blessed. At the moment God did not explain; He expected Abram to trust Him.

"So Abram went out as the Lord had commanded him. . . . And he took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son. . . and they went out to go into the land of Chanaan." This land is Palestine of today; it was the heritage of the descendants of Abram, the promised land of the exiled Israelites in Egypt and in the desert. He came to a likely site, between the ancient Bethel and Hai, a few miles north of Jerusalem; one of his

first acts after he had established his home was to offer worship to God: "He built there also an altar to the Lord, and called upon his name." Abram as head of the family exercised priestly functions; this was a characteristic of the age of the Patriarchs, roughly the period between 2000 B.C. and 1700 B.C.

Some time after Abram had moved to the land of Chanaan, a famine forced him to look at least temporarily for a better place in which to live. Famines were not uncommon in Palestine; when the rains fell famine followed. Egypt, however, was somewhat better off; the Nile and its overflow were usually safeguards against famine, although the pages of Sacred Scripture tell us of the seven years of scarcity during the time of Joseph. Abram decided to seek relief in the land of the Nile, as would his descendants in the centuries to follow.

Incident Which Causes Modern Eye-brows to Be Lifted

An incident is now recorded in Sacred Scripture (Gen. 12, 11-20) that causes modern eyes to lift their ultra-modern eye-brows; and we might as well send them higher by remarking that there is a similar story to be found in chapter twenty of Genesis. My personal efforts to teach the story of Abram and endeavor to impress upon pupils, particularly the feminine ones, the greatness of this great man have not been very successful; in their eyes the greatness is marred by the apparent selfishness and lack of so-called chivalry on the part of the husband in regard to Sarai. If I may be permitted a digression, this is typical of the modern mind that judges men and women by a flaw or fault in their character, usually external, and fails to grasp the nobility of these same men and women, which is manifested in their daily life. Thus a mother who is raising five children and is forming and molding their characters is judged, not by her wondrous work in the home, but by the condition of her hands. Abram was obedient to God, and was God's friend; but the modern mind fastens on his treatment of Sarai to belittle him. But let us study the incident in *its* historical background, not in *ours*:

And when he was near to enter into Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife: I know that thou art a beautiful woman; and that when the Egyptians shall see thee, they will say: She is his wife. And they will kill me, and keep thee. Say, therefore, I pray thee, that thou art my sister, that I may be well used for thee, and that my soul may live for thy sake.

First of all there was no deliberate lie on the part of Abram; his wife was his relative, as we have already remarked, and according to the Hebrew usage was called "sister," for that language did not have any word to express relationships beyond the first degree. We note this fact in the story of our Lord; those who are called his sisters and brothers (cf. Matt. 13, 55–56) are his cousins. In modern terminology we say that Abram used mental reservation, that he told only part of the truth.

Yet was he justified in concealing the fact that Sarai was his wife? Abram knew the customs of his time only too well; he knew the little regard that kings or their courts had for human life. He knew also that the rulers of his time would let nothing stand in the way of their whims and desires; should Pharao have desired to place Sarai in his harem, he would have thought little of killing Abram. It is true that Abram misjudged both the Pharao of Egypt and, later, King Abimelech, for from the context both seem to have had an appreciation of marriage; we must not forget, however, that Abram came from the East, where rulers were more despotic than in Egypt and Gerara. Despite these extenuating circumstances, was Abram justified in permitting Sarai, by his mental reservation, to be placed in a position that would be the occasion of violation of the marriage bond? It would seem that he was not completely guiltless; yet it is difficult to say how guilty. Certainly, in view of the incomplete conception of morality at his time, his guilt was far less than that of a husband who acts similarly in Christian times. It may be that some readers will think or are thinking that we should whitewash Abram and present him as absolutely guiltless; but this is not necessary. Abram was still *in via* and, therefore, not so confirmed in grace that he could not sin; saints are not

those who never sinned (if this were true we should have but one: our Blessed Mother); rather saints are those who have sinned and have overcome themselves by repentance and mortification.

Aftermath of the Incident

Sacred Scripture does not moralize, however; it simply records the incident and its aftermath. Abram proved himself a prophet; Sarai was taken into the house of Pharao, and Abram was well used because of her. Abram had foreseen but could not prevent; God now intervened and scourged the house of Pharao until the latter came to recognize that this punishment was due to Sarai. There are many questions that might be asked: What was the scourge? How did Pharao connect this scourge with Sarai? Why did God intervene? God Himself has not given any answers in His inspired books; and it is practically useless for us to try to find the reasons and the answers. If we turn to the second episode, however, we find some information that is more explanatory: after King Abimelech had taken Sarai (cf. Gen. 20):

God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and he said to him: Lo, thou shalt die for the woman thou hast taken; for she hath a husband. Now Abimelech had not touched her, and he said: Lord, wilt thou slay a nation, that is ignorant and just? Did not he say to me: She is my sister; and she say: He is my brother? In the simplicity of my heart, and cleanness of my hands, have I done this. And God said to him: And I know that thou didst it with a sincere heart: and therefore I withheld thee from sinning against me, and I suffered thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet. And he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: but if thou wilt not restore her know that thou shalt surely die, thou and all that are thine.... And when Abraham prayed, God healed Abimelech and his wife, and his handmaids, and they bore children. For the Lord had closed up every womb of the house of Abimelech, on account of Sara, Abraham's wife

(The change of spelling in the names of Abraham and Sara will be explained). In this second instance then we have the reason for God's mercy towards Abimelech: namely, Abimelech had been in good faith. We know what the scourge

was: closing the wombs of the house of Abimelech; but we do not know how Abimelech connected the punishment with Sarai. Some might say that this is evident: Sarai was taken, the punishment followed, therefore; but it might be well to curb our conjecturing somewhat when there is question of moral connections. Nor should we be too hasty in applying the explanations of this second event to the first; God's scourge could easily have been something other than the closing of wombs. And it may have been Sarai's obedience to Abram rather than Pharao's good faith that caused God to be merciful. One last remark: Those who are want to condemn Abram should note that God called him a prophet, and told Abimelech that he (Abram) would pray and that He would accept his prayers. The prayers of sinners are not heard, so Sacred Scripture says (John 9, 31).

Anxiety Caused by Abram's and Lot's Wealth

Abram left Egypt a rich man; he came to the south, as Genesis (ch. 13) says, namely, to that section of land south of Hebron and sometimes called Negeb. By stages, it would seem, he came to Bethel, where he built an altar (Gen. 12, 8); here he stopped and once more he "called upon his name" (that of the Lord). Abram's wealth was now to cause him some anxiety; not only his, but Lot's also. "But Lot also, who was with Abram, had flocks of sheep, and herds of beasts, and tents. Neither was the land able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, and they could not dwell together. Whereupon also there arose a strife between the herdsmen of Abram and of Lot." Wealth did not consist in money in Abram's time; rather it consisted in land, in flocks, and in slaves.

As head of this family Abram had the right to choose whatever part of the land he desired; yet we see that Abram ceded his right to his nephew, Lot: "Let there be no quarrel, I beseech thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen: for we are brethren. Behold the whole land is before thee: depart from me I pray thee; if thou wilt

go to the left hand, I will take the right: if thou choose the right hand, I will pass to the left." Abram was magnanimous not only in making Lot equal to himself, "for we are brethren," but also in allowing Lot to make the choice. Lot chose the land "about the Jordan, which was watered throughout, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, as the paradise of the Lord, and like Egypt as one comes to Segor." Lot stood on a hill between Bethel and Hai; from it he could have seen the valley of the Jordan to the north of the Dead Sea as well as the northern tip of the sea itself.

Once the decision had been made Lot lost no time in taking up his new quarters, "and Lot abode in the towns that were about the Jordan, and dwelt in Sodom." As a reward for Abram's magnanimity (this seems to be inferred) God reiterated in more specific terms the promise that He had made to him (cf. Gen. 12, 7): "Lift up thy eyes, and look from the place wherein thou now art, to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west. All the land which thou seest, I will give to thee, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth."

"Blood Will Tell"

There is a saying that "Blood will tell"; and the incident of the battle with the four kings illustrates how true it is. This is no place to discourse on the names of the kings involved in this war, except to remark that the very first mentioned, Amraphel (Gen. 14, 1), is frequently identified with the famous Hammurabi, king of ancient Babylon in the twentieth century before Christ; as a consequence we are able to date Abram's life with comparative certainty. Our interest is in the fact of Lot's capture and Abram's successful battle against the captors: ". . . when Abram had heard . . . that his brother Lot was taken, he numbered of the servants born in his house, three hundred and eighteen well appointed: and pursued them to Dan. And dividing his company, he rushed upon them in the night: and defeated them . . ."

The first fact to be noticed is the size of Abram's army; we

are not to think of warfare in those days as on a huge scale. Kings were many, and their kingdoms were very small, perhaps a city and a radius of not more than ten miles. Yet the victory was a great one in the eyes of Abram's contemporaries, and stamped him as a power to be reckoned with in the land of Chanaan. Hence, upon his return, the king of Sodom came out to pay him homage.

The king of Salem also came forth, but we must let Scripture recount this mysterious incident: "But Melchisedech the king of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the most high God, blessed him, and said: Blessed be Abram by the most high God, who created heaven and earth. And blessed be the most high God, by whose protection the enemies are in thy hands." Abram then gave Melchisedech tithes of all the booty from the war.

We call this a mysterious incident, first because Melchisedech suddenly emerged on the scene as a king-priest and as suddenly disappeared, yet our Blessed Lord is typified by him (cf. Ps. 109, 4; Heb. 5, 5–6; 6, 19—7, 28); secondly, because Melchisedech blessed Abram and received tithes of him, indications of superiority. In all probability the incident did not signify much to Abram, but it was to mean much to his descendants, as St. Paul brought out in the above references of the Epistle to the Hebrews. At the moment Abram was concerned with his own reputation; he was a stranger, a foreigner, as we say today, in the land of Chanaan. Hence he was careful to see that his reputation for honesty was preserved; otherwise he would have a difficult time living in the midst of the land: "I lift up my hand to the Lord God the most high, the possessor of heaven and earth, that from the very woof thread unto the shoe latchet, I will not take of any things that are thine, lest thou say: I have enriched Abram...." This address was made to the king of Sodom, who had invited Abram to take part in the spoils of war.

(To be continued)

IRISH VISIT

By THOMAS W. SHEEHAN
74 Gardner Parkway, Peabody, Massachusetts

The building is old and drab but the spirit within is bright and cheerful with activity—of the mental kind. We have entered a small rural school on the west coast of Eire. The class, the seventh standard, is studying the parable of "The Good Samaritan." We are charmed by the conduct of the class, the give-and-take of discussion, the pupils' narratives of practical applications of the lesson to present-day life and the realization that the pupils are making this a live topic. By the end of the class meeting, the solitary wooden blackboard is well covered with lines and diagrams used as visual aids during the class discussion. Here is a class really pupil-centered! Is the pupil activity the result of the teacher's power? Perhaps it is in part due to the clear cool breezes coming through the open windows from the ocean a few yards away. One thing is certain: there are no drowsy boys or girls in this school.

Teachers Trained to Teach

We turn for help on several puzzling features of the school work to the school supervisor who has accompanied us on our visit. He tells us that the teacher is a fairly recent graduate of one of the new and thoroughly modernized teacher training colleges. "Under Eire," he declares, "we train teachers to teach, not simply to hear lessons."

Upon entering the classroom we noted that the teacher was placing on the wall two large cards on which were printed in both the Irish and English languages, the words, "Religious Instruction." From the supervisor we learn that the display of these two cards is required every time religious instruction is given and that they must remain in view of all the pupils throughout the period. As the teacher places the cards on the

wall, he must announce clearly that the time for religious instruction has arrived. The purpose of this procedure is, of course, to prevent misunderstandings and to make religious instruction a fundamental part of the school course.

"To get the proper perspective," remarks the supervisor, "you must realize that only 3.2 per cent of the school children in all Eire are Protestants and that the Department of Education is very solicitous in providing all reasonable privileges for this small minority. We don't want any group of forgotten pupils in our schools." Wrinkling his brow, the supervisor in retrospect emphasizes some of the main features in the development of the school system in the new Ireland. These schools are founded on a religious basis, *i.e.*, schools under Catholic or Protestant management.

Protestant schools are sometimes subdivided into schools under Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Methodist administration. Eire has been generous in granting financial aid to schools, whether Catholic or not. Normally the regulations of the Department of Education provide for the continuance of state financial aid to schools of ten pupils. In practice, however, the aid has not been withdrawn when there has been evidence of the need of a suitable school of any denomination in a neighborhood, even with an average attendance as low as seven. In other words, a modified grant has been continued to a school under Protestant control as long as an average attendance of seven is Protestant. The same would apply to Catholic Schools in a Protestant district but, because of the relative size of religious groups, the small Protestant schools have the advantage of this regulation.

Regulations Protect Protestant Minority

Gratified because of our evident interest, the supervisor took from the teacher's desk a neatly bound book of rules. He smiled all across his face as he said, "In the words of your great countryman, 'Let's look at the record.'" He then proceeded to read several regulations planned to protect the small Protestant minority. One forbids teachers to discuss, while in

the presence of pupils of different faiths, matters of religious controversy. "As though any Irishman would care to indulge in a controversy," said the supervisor, his blue eyes twinkling.

A regulation states that no pupil may be present at any religious instruction of which his parents or guardians disapprove. Such pupils are excused, at reasonable times, for the purpose of receiving religious instruction at other centers.

To prevent misunderstandings, the religious denomination of each pupil is entered in each teacher's official register and this information must be obtained from the parent or guardian. There is, therefore, no guesswork on the pupils' classification by religions.

Nor is the teacher to assume that there will be no objection to religious instruction when pupils differ from him in religious belief. In fact, the dissent of the parent is to be implied and no religious instruction may be given to a pupil of a different creed unless the parent or guardian expressly requests it.

It appears that the system of religious instruction in Eire has been so carefully planned that provisions have been made for all possible contingencies. The Protestant minorities are not forced to cover. There are no Protestant hedge schools in Eire because the plans for religious instruction are the results of the fair-minded discussions and the considered judgments of both Catholic and Protestant groups. Here is something more than mere toleration of religious minorities! Eire, avoiding equally partiality and disfavor, has opened the same opportunities to all groups.

As we crowded into the supervisor's small car for the return to Galway, our attention was attracted to the right by the abrupt crash of the waves while the ocean continued its age-old and relentless battle with the rocks. They were making a considerable noise, the waves.

To the left the serenity of late summer lay like a veil on the green valleys and gentle rolling uplands. We heard sounds. But these sounds were the musical tones of two tradesmen, speaking in the Irish language, as they followed the narrow path beaten for years by the hoofs of market-bound burros.

Book Reviews

An Introduction to the Study of Ascetical and Mystical Theology. By the Most Rev. Alban Goodier, S.J. (Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1946; pages 209; price \$3.00).

This book comes as a timely tract on the spiritual life by one of its eminent authors, Archbishop Alban Goodier. It contains full reflection and a summary of all his spiritual writings. Its style is clear and a happy arrangement should appeal to a wide audience. It is a timely issue of the Archbishop's lectures, inasmuch as recent canonizations and the reaction among thinking people to the materialism of the world have caused a marked renewal of interest in asceticism.

The book, divided into three parts, historical, doctrinal, and practical, presents as a unified whole the Church's teaching on the spiritual life, whatever be the channel through which it flows, in theory and in practice, in principle and in application.

If the book has a central theme, it certainly is this: man's entire dependence on the grace and the help of Almighty God that he may do anything good, let alone raise himself to higher things. Historically, the author shows how it was the Church with her insistence on the necessity of divine grace in practical life, that was able to convert the pagan world, and to repel at the same time any evil influences that might rise against it, both from without, and within, from those who

unfortunately fell into error. Doctrinally, the author proves conclusively that Christ is the source of the spiritual life, as well as the way we must follow. Finally, the author shows how our co-operation with God's grace is effected through purgation, that is, prayer, and mortification; through the illuminative way, the acquisition of virtue; through the unitive way, contemplation.

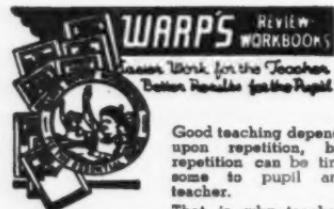
The reading of the text is easy, obviously thought provoking. A book such as this manual cannot but be recommended to the interested mind.

(REV.) JOSEPH R. BERKMYRE

Breviloquium. By Saint Bonaventure. Translated by Erwin Esser Nemmers, A.M., Mus.M., LL.B. (B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1946; pages 248, Index; price \$3.00).

Contemporary of St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure is ranked among the most eminent theologians in the history of the Catholic Church. Both men died the same year. There is no contemporary biography of St. Bonaventure, in spite of the fact that he wielded prodigious influence on the thinking men of his own generation, both within his religious order, and outside of it. This book is a response to many pleadings that he set forth his teachings in concise form. It is in

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(REV.) JOSEPH R. BERKMYRE

The Mission Study Leaflets (Second Series, sixteen leaflets). For mission studies in grade schools; four pages each; price, two cents each, with discount in quantity. (Published by Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, Cincinnati 26, Ohio.)

In 1945 the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade inaugurated a series of four-page pamphlets for mission studies in grade schools. In 1946 sixteen new additions to this series were published, covering China and Africa and the lives of Catholic missionaries of modern times. Each leaflet is a folder, $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ inches, with illustrations, reading, and classroom exercises. The unitary treatment does away with the need for supplementary material. The publishers design eight of the present pamphlets for fifth-sixth grades, and eight for seventh-eighth grades. The first group will study China and Great Missionaries, while the second group will devote their attention to Africa and Modern Missionaries. The

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latter series includes some remarkable missionaries of the Second World War.

The second of the leaflets on China tells the story of Father Matthew Ricci, the famous Jesuit missionary who went to China in 1582. He interested his Chinese listeners through a map of the countries of the world as they were then known, won their confidence, and planned to draw a map, decorated with clocks, paintings, and statues, that would give to China the place of greatest importance. The map was a remarkable piece of work pleasing to the Emperor and his household, and the missionary-cartographer was given a residence and the freedom of the palace. The Chinese received the Christian teachings graciously, and during the next thirty years more than three hundred princes of royal blood and members of the imperial court were baptized. Many of the people followed the example of their leaders. It is said that the map of Father Ricci brought more converts into the Church than any one of his many books.

The leaflet on Africa describes the division of this great continent into two parts: North Africa, including the Sahara Desert with the lands to the east, and Central and South Africa to the very tip of the continent. The student learns that Our Lord Himself resided in Africa for a time, and that flourishing Christian centers were established there in the first centuries after Christ. Persecutions, wars, heresies, and the Mohammedan invasion practically crushed Christianity in this territory and firmly established

Mohammedanism. Little progress was made in reestablishing Christianity against the rugged barrier of Mohammedanism until Charles Cardinal Lavigerie founded the White Fathers and the White Sisters in the nineteenth century, and sent them to do missionary work in Africa. Through the charity of Christ in action they are gradually winning converts and wearing down Mohammedan opposition.

In Central and South Africa, the harsh climate and many warlike tribes offered serious opposition to missionary work. Americans began the modern missionary movement in Central Africa. The Holy Ghost Fathers went to the assistance of Father Edward Barron of Philadelphia, and other groups have since entered the American mission field. Despite a constant struggle against the forces of paganism, the missionaries have made remarkable progress and their work is hallowed by the blood of the forty boy martyrs of Uganda (1886). There is a native clergy with two bishops, but many more missionaries are needed in this vast field where whole villages and tribes are ready for instruction in the Catholic Faith.

Other pamphlets expand the story of missionary effort in China and in Africa, and the two series on Great Missionaries relate the work of stalwart apostles in other areas. The children of America will be particularly interested in the life and work of Father Demetrius Gallitzin, early Pennsylvania missionary, already known to them as "The Prince Who Gave His Gold Away." This series of leaflets will make every Catholic conscious of his duty to help carry

the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all parts of the world.

(REV.) P. E. CAMPBELL

Faith. A national monthly picture magazine devoted entirely to Catholic subjects, made its appearance recently, with the publication of the March number. Slightly less than 11 by 14 inches in size, it contains 40 pages of pictures of Catholic events and people in the United States and throughout the world.

The magazine devotes nearly three pages to Pope Pius XII who has just completed eight years as Supreme Pontiff. Among the various countries represented in the March issue, in addition to the United States, are England, Italy, Japan, Alaska, France, Canada, Germany, Czechoslovakia and the Holy Land. A page of pictures shows how a Catholic scientist has made snow artificially, a process which may have far-reaching effects on snow precipitation. Also covered are such subjects as Boys' Town, the Dionne quintuplets, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Holy Name Society, Toy Bowl football game, converts among the Negroes and many other topics.

Faith is published by Joseph P. Driscoll, of Buffalo, New York, who has served in various editorial positions on Catholic publications in that city for the past 20 years (Box 72, Station B, Buffalo, N. Y.; \$3.00).

Our Review Table

The Quest of Ben Hered. By C. M. de Heredia, S.J. Translated from the Spanish by Rev. James T. Weber and J. M. Alvarez-Tostado. Memoirs of a reporter in the time of Christ. An account of the social, political, economic and religious conditions in Palestine at the time of Christ, by the famous Mexican Jesuit, written as an American newspaper man of today

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might write a "behind-the-Gospels" account (The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1947; pages x, 324; price \$3.00).

Modern Church Architecture. By Dom E. Roulin. Translated from the French, *Nos Eglises*, by C. Cornelia Craigie and John A. Southwell. For the priest and the architect, particularly one who may be called upon to design a church, whether large or small. The book deals at length with church appurtenances and interior decoration: altars, statues, paintings, stations of the cross, crucifixes, chalices and candlesticks. It holds that the present age need not copy the great achievements of the past. Both the usefulness and attractiveness of the book are greatly enhanced by more than seven hundred illustrations, which are listed (B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1947; pages xxiii, 902 with Index; price \$10).

Holy Week in Large and Small Churches. By Rev. Laurence J. O'Connell. A liturgical work which gives directions for all ceremonies of Holy Week, in detail, whether they are conducted solemnly or in small churches without deacon, subdeacon and with lay acolytes. Charts illustrate the

various movements, without cross references (The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1947; pages xviii, 332, with Bibliography and Index; price \$3.00).

After Black Coffee. By Robert I. Gannon, S.J. Some after-dinner or "after black coffee" speeches by the president of Fordham University, delivered "to business men," "to professional men," "to Irish men," "to non-Irishmen," and "to fellow-men." Two themes which occur most persistently are "the dignity of man as a spiritual being, and the importance of tradition on maintaining, or better, in regaining our way of life" (The Declan X. McMullen Company, New York, 1946; pages 184; price \$2.00).

Economic Roads for American Democracy. By William Van Til. A publication of the consumer education study sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, a department of the National Educational Association. This book is intended to make future citizens more intelligent in respect to choice among the five major lines of political-economic policy which we are now being urged to follow (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1947; pages ix, 252 with Index; price \$1.80).

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